

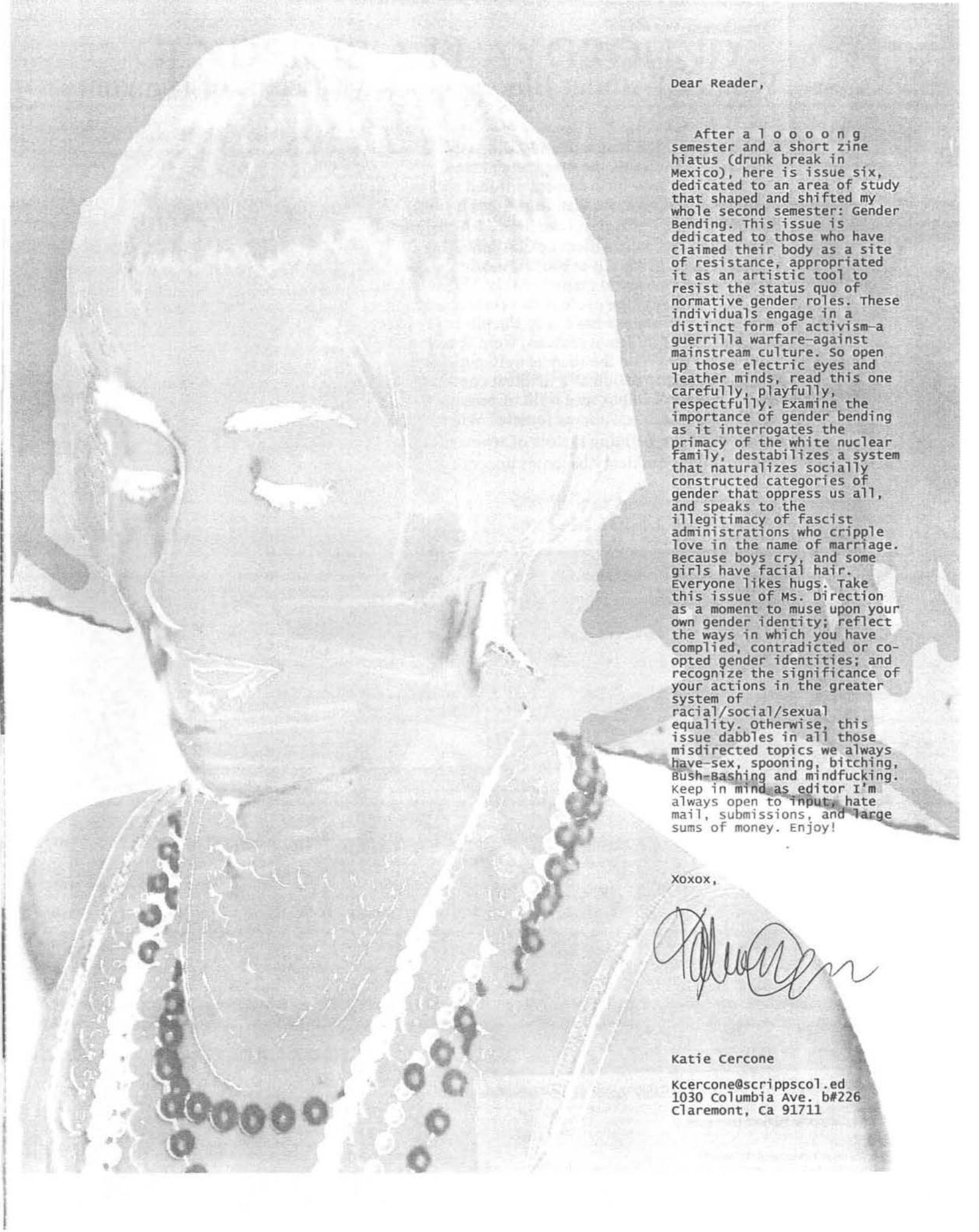
MS direction

Welcome to the road not taken

Gender
Bending



Summer 2004



Dear Reader,

After a l o o o n g semester and a short zine hiatus (drunk break in Mexico), here is issue six, dedicated to an area of study that shaped and shifted my whole second semester: Gender Bending. This issue is dedicated to those who have claimed their body as a site of resistance, appropriated it as an artistic tool to resist the status quo of normative gender roles. These individuals engage in a distinct form of activism—a guerrilla warfare—against mainstream culture. So open up those electric eyes and leather minds, read this one carefully, playfully, respectfully. Examine the importance of gender bending as it interrogates the primacy of the white nuclear family, destabilizes a system that naturalizes socially constructed categories of gender that oppress us all, and speaks to the illegitimacy of fascist administrations who cripple love in the name of marriage. Because boys cry, and some girls have facial hair. Everyone likes hugs. Take this issue of Ms. Direction as a moment to muse upon your own gender identity; reflect the ways in which you have complied, contradicted or co-opted gender identities; and recognize the significance of your actions in the greater system of racial/social/sexual equality. Otherwise, this issue dabbles in all those misdirected topics we always have—sex, spooning, bitching, Bush-bashing and mindfucking. Keep in mind as editor I'm always open to input, hate mail, submissions, and large sums of money. Enjoy!

XOXOX,



Katie Cercone

Kcercone@scrippscol.ed
1030 Columbia Ave. b#226
Claremont, ca 91711

Up until 1991 it was unconstitutional to sell a homosexual person alcohol in a bar in Virginia.

-Virtual Equality, Urvashi Vaid

Women Without Blood

According to *Time* magazine, bleeding isn't cool. In a 2003 issue, the magazine named Seasonale, the new birth control pill that makes a woman bleed no more than four times a year, one of the year's "Coolest Inventions." According to Brazilian researcher Elsimar Coutinho, the modern woman—who lives longer, has fewer babies and does more—has *too* many periods. The solution? *Naturally* suppress the cycle with synthesized hormones. Already we have seen the pill being used for a number of different reasons, from acne to painful cramps. With the increasingly popular viewing of menstruation as a medical condition, will the pill replace Tampax as a right of passage for the *modern* American adolescent female? What happens when one of the defining factors of womanhood—menstruation—suddenly becomes uncool?

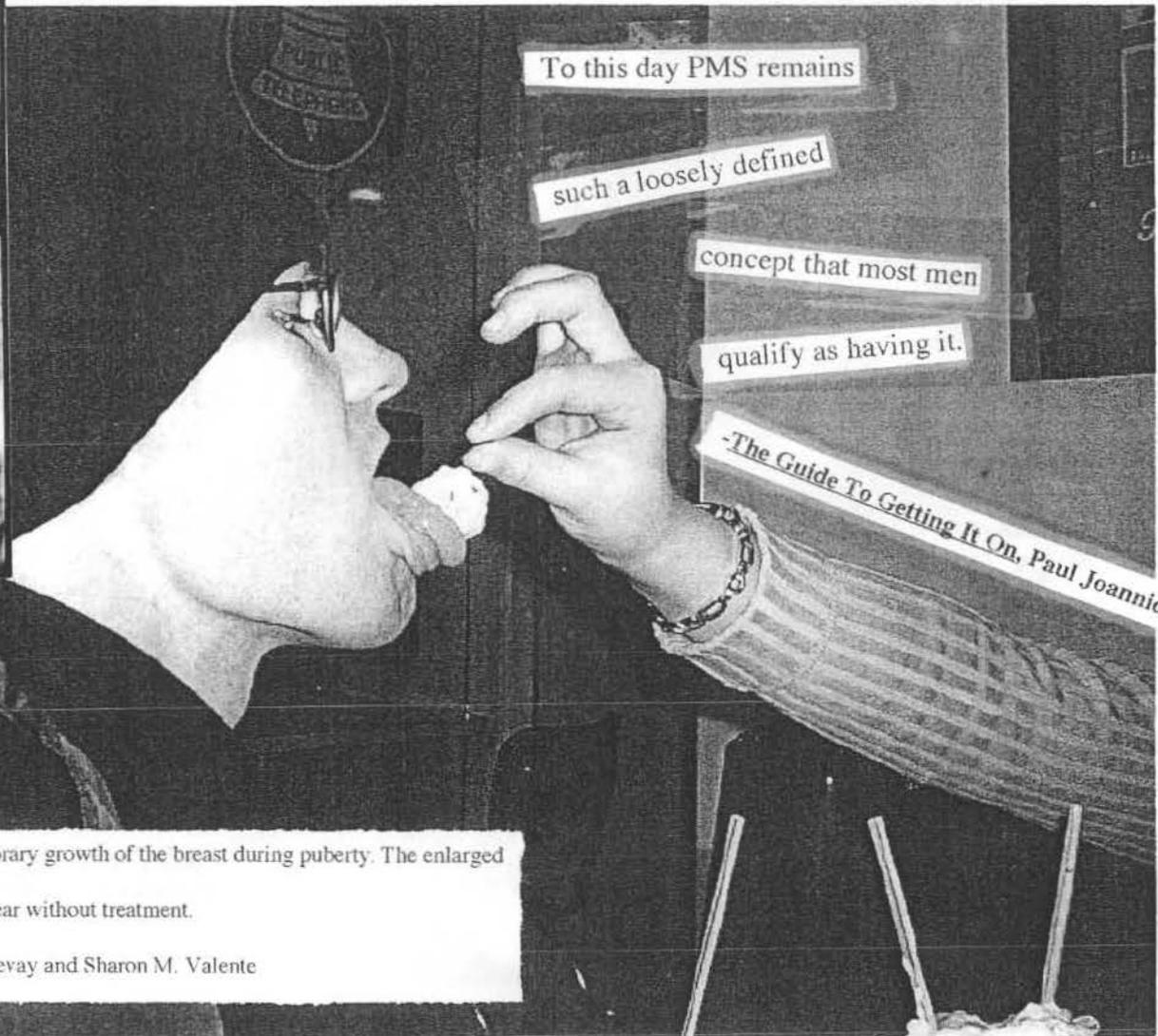
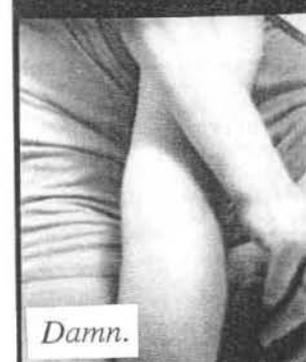
Sources: "Coolest Inventions 2003" *Time*
"Uncool Period" *Adbusters*, Spring 2004

Citizens of Humanity

The latest high-end fashion must have—Citizens For Humanity jeans—some Styles running for up to \$176 dollars at Nordstrom. The jeans boast a "stretchy fit with a healthy flair," but I don't understand what's so healthy or humane about spending that much money on a pair of pants when people down the street are undernourished. My question is, which *citizens* and what *humanity* are they referring to? Is it the small children in the sweatshops making the jeans? The size zero models wearing them? The women who can spend more than several months worth of garment industry worker's wages to buy jeans they can only wear with equally expensive designer heels?

Over half the world has never made a phone c

-Global Sex by Dennis Altman

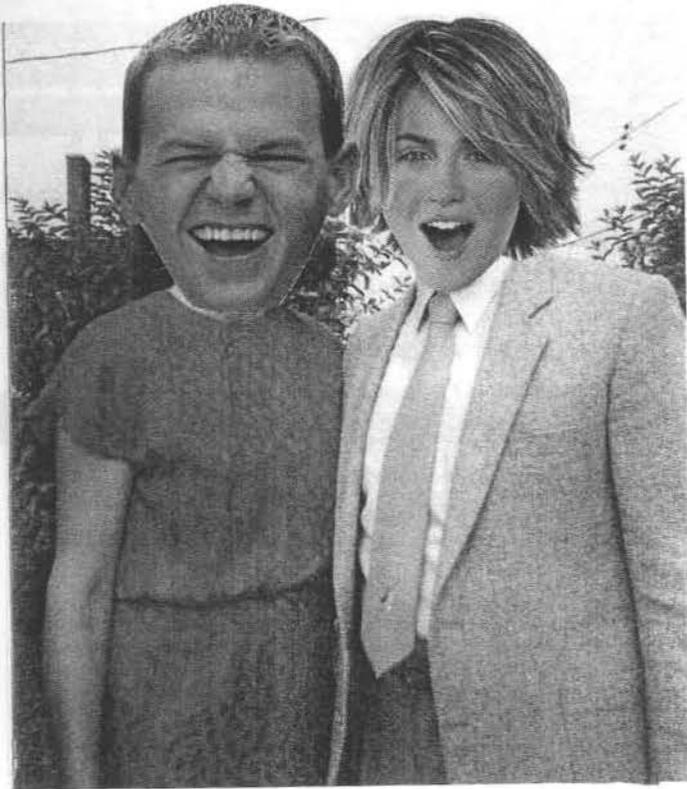


Many boys experience temporary growth of the breast during puberty. The enlarged breasts nearly always disappear without treatment.

-Human Sexuality, Simon Levay and Sharon M. Valente

GENDER IS A PLAYGROUND

A Glossary for Genderbreaking, Genderbending People



Transsexual: Transsexuals are extremely unhappy in the gender to which they are assigned and change their gender roles and bodies to live as members of the "other" sex. Modern medical technology (synthesized sex hormones, electrolysis, plastic surgery) makes this transformation much easier than it was in the past.

Transgender: Transgenderists live as members of the other sex, but without the extreme need or desire to modify their bodies shown by transsexuals. Some live as members of the other sex, while others stake out "third gender" status. Transgenderists may take hormones, but do not have genital sex reassignment surgery.

Gender Dysphoria: Medical term coined by Norman Fisk in the 1970s, since changed to "Gender Identity Disorder" in the 1990s. The transgender community itself uses terms that do not emphasize unhappiness or mental illness, such as "gender variance."

Transvestic Fetishism: Diagnostic term used by the medical community to label individuals who dress in clothes of the "other" sex. The transgender community generally uses "cross dresser."

Intersex: Intersexed (hermaphroditic) persons are born with genitals showing the characteristics of both sexes. Many have surgery in infancy, and many of those who do grow up feeling they have been robbed of an essential part of themselves.

Clotheshorse: A person who cross-dresses but is unwilling to accept the label.

Coyote: Native American trickster god sometimes portrayed as male, sometimes as female, a straight/gay/lesbian cross-dresser of either gender. In some stories Coyote carries his penis in a box on his back.

Terms for gender benders: Flaming, Drag Monarch, Bigendered, Gender-free, Gender- trash, Metagendered, Shapeshifter, Poygendered, Ambigendered.

Gynandromorph: Scientific term for insects displaying characteristics of multiple sexes.

Gender-free pronouns: Heesh, Hem, Hesh, He-she, Hir, Ze, Himmer

PoMogendered/PoMoSexual: Term for *Postmodernly* gendered/sexually identified individuals.

Scrat: Diminutive of *uelscratta*, old English for hermaphrodite.

Senp'aa: Tewa Native American word meaning "manly woman."

Weekend Warrior: A person who crosses, bends or breaks gender only on weekends.

Wiya numpa: Lakota Sioux Native American for "double woman": a hermaphrodite spirit who appears to people and requires them to start cross-dressing.

Wobo: Maale African word used to refer to gender-bending people, means *crooked*.

Woodworker: A transsexual who prefers to "blend into the woodwork" rather than be openly trans.

X-dresser: Short for cross-dresser.



I like femaleness—the curves, the wet spots—and I like femininity displayed, lace and lipstick and manicured nails, but it doesn't turn my head like worn Levi's and rolled tee-shirt sleeves, a stance like James Dean hustling on 42nd street, the kind of womanness that isn't taught in school.

I don't like smoking, but I'll put up with cigarette breath to watch a woman curl a lit butt into her palm like a Marlboro Man.

—"Why I love butch women," by Carol A. Queen

Each of us, those at the margins of gender who walk beside us, pick away at that sticky glue that keeps everyone mired in place. For butches, being butch is about being yourself; for society, being butch is about slapping convention on the face.

Butches are the cream that rise to the top of the pail of milk society

would love to spill—or to gulp down in great draughts the

quicker to make us disappear.

-Dagger; on Butch Women by Lily Burana, Roxxie Due, and Linnea Due

The Body as a Site of Resistance: Interview with Gender Queer Eli Green



Eli Green is a slender red head with a nice complexion and a distinctly confident air. With black slacks, a white collared shirt and short spiky hair, ze is able to create a boyish charm challenged only by her delicate feminine face. A self-identified gender-queer individual from Claremont, California, ze manipulates appearance in order to challenge the illusion of gender. Through hir interrogation of the assumptions of the mainstream ze is an activist for the LGBTQ (lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer) community.

MS: In what way is your body and identity a site of resistance to traditional gender norms?

E: A person's body is one of their most powerful tools in resisting gender norms. There are many ways to manipulate appearance, to challenge the illusion that gender is easily read on someone's body. That is what I do - I manipulate gendered signals to confuse people, to challenge the idea that gender is rigid and binary in nature.

MS: What is your motivation in reconfiguring societal gender roles? Can you speak to the effect this might have in terms of gay/women's rights? Do you feel the oppression of LGBT individuals and women stems from a societal rigidity of gender roles-- that which devalues the "feminine", and gives primacy to the heterosexual nuclear family?

E: I think that the ideal state of being is a world in which gender exists in a non-binary form, where no person is oppressed or privileged because of their gender expressions. This would have a huge impact on the feminist movement for obvious reasons. There would also be a significant impact on the LGBTQ community because a large amount of hate crimes against LGBQ people are perpetrated because of perceived gender violations of expression. (Meaning that LGBQ people are usually attacked for being butch, effeminate, queer-appearing, etc - all gender based expressions.) I think that the rigidity of gender in our current world causes huge amount of oppression for everyone who has any sort of gender. I don't think it is limited at devaluing the feminine, I think it also extremely devalues any sort of female masculinity, androgyny, transness etc.

MS: Do you feel traditional femininity is disempowering and in what way? Was this a factor in your decision to play with your gender identity? In terms of power dynamics, how have your relationships changed as you have chosen to identify as more male/masculine? Are there parts of a female/feminine identity you consciously choose to retain?

E: I think that traditional femininity is disempowering if it doesn't work or fit for the person involved. I think that compared to being and existing as a trans person, the traditional feminine is empowering for those whom it fits. I chose to start playing with gender when I had tried all options of existing as a feminine creature and no matter what I tried, it never worked. My label of identifying as genderqueer is less about playing with gender, but more of not letting gender play with my mind - giving myself permission to exist as other. There are definitely parts of what is usually considered feminine that I have/use/embody (I am not sure how much choice is involved) - are they still feminine when I do them, I am not sure.... In regards to power dynamics, I am really not sure how to answer that. I know that there have been situations where I have passed as male, and received male privilege, which I was completely shocked at and had no idea how to handle, but those situations don't happen everyday. I think that for all my efforts most of the people in my life perceive me as female, regardless of how I identify, because the binary is a habit that makes them feel better. That means that a lot of my friendships, etc haven't really changed since I have come out.

MS: How do you envision the acceptance of transgendered individuals and the dismantling of traditional gender roles playing out in society as a whole?

E: I think that it is a very, very slow process and I am not sure if traditional gender roles will ever be completely dismantled. I think that it will come from the hard work of transpeople and allies standing up for our rights and challenging the standard notions of what it means to be trans. The more that this happens, the more space there will be for people to shift out of traditional gender roles, or not, as they choose.

MS: What weight do you give to gendered pronouns and descriptors? How do you personally prefer to be addressed-- he/she/other? What is the power in naming/claiming for you in terms of personal identity?

E: I personally strongly prefer gender neutral pronouns (ze/hir). Female pronouns don't fit my identity, and really neither do male. (The problem of course comes in that most people don't know how to or simply will not use gn pronouns. I don't identify as fitting very well into either gendered option. I think that masculinity feels more comfortable because it is closer to "other" since I occupy a female body - but when it comes down to it, pure masculinity doesn't fit either. Claiming myself as genderqueer is important to me because it is the only term I have ever found that fits. I do consider myself a part of the trans community and will self-identify as trans if that makes someone understand more/better, but I really stand by and prefer the term genderqueer (at least for the time being) because I strongly feel that it better fits my gender identity.

MS: What power is to be had in pushing individuals out of their comfort zones in terms of "acceptable" gender identity /behavior? How can this power be used as a constructive tool?

E: I think that there is a lot of power to play with in this arena. Playing with this power (whether by choice or by nature) can be hugely dangerous and should be done with caution. I do think that it can be used constructively if it can at all make people think. I believe that every time someone sees a person that they can't quite read / figure out their gender it gives them cause for thought. Now, whether or not people think about it past that fleeting moment is up for debate, however it opens the door, which is the first step in the battle. I think that there is also a great amount of educational power in being out about being trans/genderqueer/intersex, etc. The more people can see that transness and gender variance can be a part of a normal existence, the more power gained.

MS: That's genderbeautiful.

Penis Mashers and Feminist Fury

There I am, beautiful, young, supple. Unidentified male approaches and after quick unremarkable eye contact, comes up behind me and casually mashes his lumpy, unwelcome penis up against the back of my round unsuspecting butt. Under most circumstances, what just happened would be considered sexual assault, or more specifically, frotteurism; a male frotteur or "masher" being an individual who is sexually fixated on having physical contact with others—usually women—without their consent.¹ Yet add dim lighting, ear throbbing rap, tons of sweat soaked bodies and liquid courage; it is just another night in any hip night club. Freak dancing, an obscenely intimate public display of genital rubbing has come to represent American youth's most popular form of dancing—and in most cases, its only form.

I like to dance, I love to sweat, shake and shimmy, but when it comes to dry humping with strangers, I'd rather be a wallflower. Unfortunately, again and again I find myself in the minority, the odd ball out dancing in her own littler world while her friends and attractive penis mashers of the moment go at it all around. I constantly find myself moving around, casually or not so casually brushing off young men who assume that because I choose to go out, in a short skirt, I am just aching for them to hit me with their long john silver.

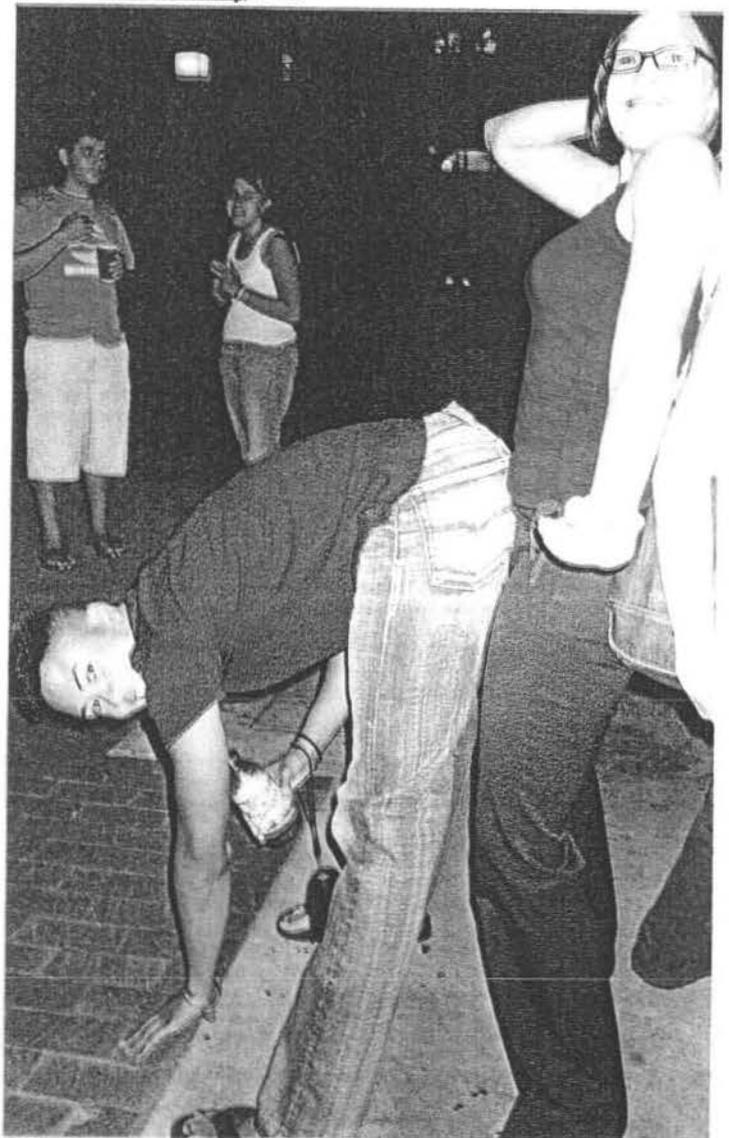
However, it is worth clarifying that in my rejection of freak dancing in no way am I condemning the act as bad, or even as anti-feminist. Rubbing genitals is an act that I believe every woman—whether she be feminist, bitch, beauty slave or all of the above—is fully entitled to. Men that freak dance are never assumed to be objectifying themselves, and neither should females. If a female chooses to freak dance because she finds it erotic, intimate, spiritual, freeing...then all the more power to her, when my girls dance they are HOT. What I do have a problem with is how freak dancing and its adaptation into youth culture as the only acceptable form of heterosexual male-female night club dancing has caused so many of us to become wholly desensitized to the undeniable vulgarity of the act. My butt and your penis, as one, moving rhythmically to *Baby Got Back*, am I dreaming or is this just gross? If we were dating would we do this in public? How do you get someone's number and get to know them over coffee when you've already memorized the topographical dimensions of their grating crotch? If we were lying horizontally on the couch doing the same

thing, wouldn't I be cheating on my boyfriend? Come on ladies, if you could have all the attention you got from Mr. Masher and you didn't have to dry hump him, what would your dance look like?

So this isn't about pointing fingers, weeding out who is feminist and who is not, or even about eliminating freak dancing. It is about wanting women to be able to go to a club and feel attractive, be able to dance with males and feel appreciated sexually, without having to rub up against anyone's penis. It is about resisting the urge to do it just because everyone else is, about examining the things we do and giving them meaning.

by Katie Cercone

¹ Levay, Simon and Valente, Sharon. "Atypical Sexuality" *Human Sexuality* 2003



In the United States it is legal in 33 states for a man to have sex with his wife while she is unconscious.

-*Human Sexuality, LeVay and Valente*



Photo by Emily Burns

Throughout his work on human sexuality, Freud emphasized the primacy of vaginal—rather than clitoral—orgasm. Today, 2/3 of women do not experience orgasm regularly during intercourse without added stimulation. Researchers now believe the leading sexual dysfunction in women is lack of interest in sex. Speaking to gender roles and sexuality, Freud maintained that “Maleness combines [the factors of] subject, activity and possession of the penis; femaleness takes [those of] objectivity and passivity. The vagina is now valued as a place of shelter for the penis, it enters into the heritage of the womb.” Freud believed lesbianism was rooted in a deep desire to become a man and linked to pre-adolescent penis-envy.

Sources: “The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in women” (1920) and “The Fragment of an analysis of a Case of Hysteria” (1923) S. Freud. *Human Sexuality*, LeVay and Valente

What is *QuirkyAlone*?



Quirk•y *adj.* Distinctive; unintentionally different; without artifice
A•lone *adj.* Apart from others, uncoupled; sometimes found in solitude (enjoying it)

Quirk•y•a•lone *n.* a person who enjoys being single (but is not opposed to being in a relationship/ and generally prefers to be alone rather than to date for the sake of being in a couple. With unique traits and an optimistic spirit; a sensibility that transcends relationship status. Also *adj.* Of, relating to, or embodying quirkyalones.
See also: romantic, idealist, independent.

Quirkyalone was a term coined by Sasha Cagen, upcoming writer, pioneering zinester and editor of *To-Do List*. In a profound moment of realization one morning after another kissless New Year’s, Sasha Cagen defined the term that would begin a movement to redefine the identity of the deeply single. Painting singledom in a refreshingly flattering light, Cagen began a movement that reclaimed the power of romantic independence. In a world where proms and marriage define the social order, quirkyalones rearticulate singleness as a natural resting state, and are willing to wait for that one in a million partner. Within three years of its creation, quirkyalone had accumulated 800 Google hits. Flooded by a number of eager fans, Cagen published a book, Quirkyalone: A Manifesto for Uncompromising Romantics, in 2004. The book includes everything you ever wanted to know about quirkyalone, including Q&A’s, interviews with quirkyalones, quirkyalone celebrity lists; as well as commentary on romantic pickiness, brilliant solitude, quirkyalone slutdom and/or obsession. The movement continues to gain popularity today, with thousands of Americans redefining their sex lives in the name of the “Quirkyalone Nation.” Sasha Cagen celebrates International Quirkyalone day on February 14th with daisies.

Top Yahoo searches for males 13-17

Top Yahoo searches for males 18-24

1. Fantasy Football
2. Britney Spears
3. 50 Cent
4. Metallica
5. Christina Aguilera
6. Linkin Park
7. Eminem
8. Fantasy Baseball
9. Jennifer Lopez
10. Beyonce Knowles

1. Fantasy Football
2. Britney Spears
3. Christina Aguilera
4. Fantasy Baseball
5. Metallica
6. Jennifer Lopez
7. 50 Cent
8. Madonna
9. Beyonce Knowles
10. Eminem

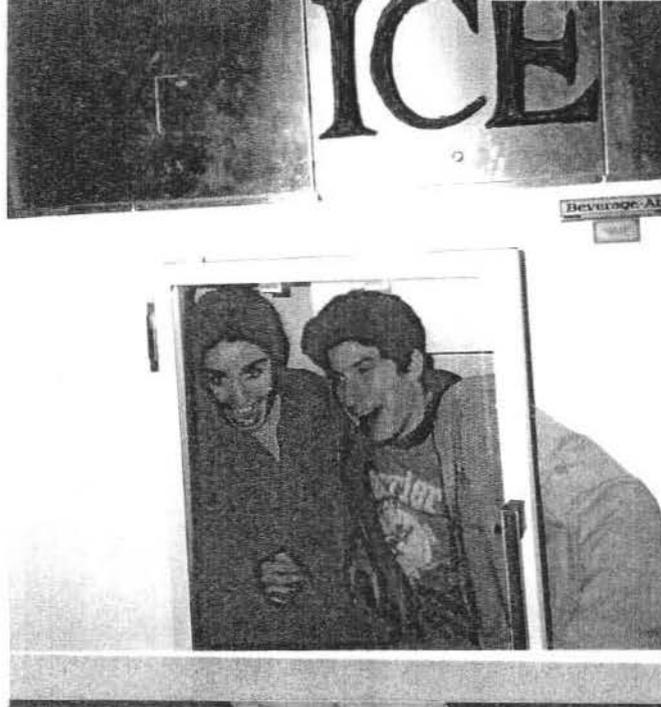
-*ElleGirl* Nov./Dec. 2003



A behavior would be considered obscene if it satisfied the three following conditions:

1. The "average" person applying "contemporary community standards" would find that the behavior, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interest.
2. The behavior is patently offensive sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law;
3. The behavior, considered in all aspects, lacks serious value.

-*Miller vs. California*, 413 U.S. 476 (1967)



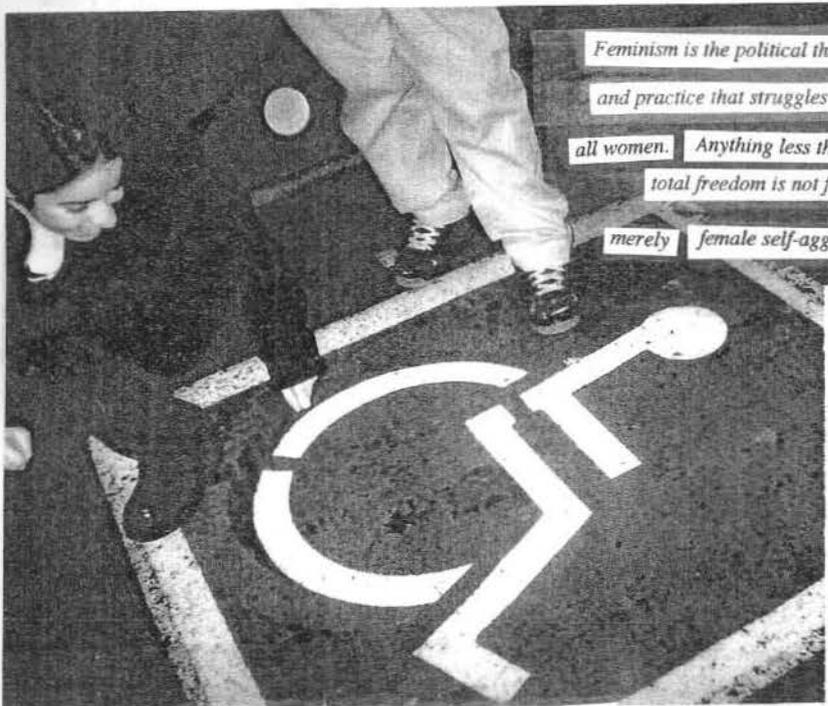
Everybody in my pants getting' tipsy!

INDSIDE GAY BASHERS PANTS

In a study designed by Henry Adams at the University of Georgia, the majority of self-identified homophobes became turned on while viewing gay male pornography. For the study, two groups of "exclusively heterosexual" men were gathered. One group consisted of men who scored very high on an index of homophobic attitudes and the other group consisted of men who did not. The men were shown a variety of sex tapes— male-male, male-female, and female-female—meanwhile their arousal was monitored by a secret penile plethysmography (measure of penile erection). When asked, all men said they were only aroused by the male-female and lesbian tapes. However, according to data collective by the penile measures, homophobic men, and not the non-homophobic men, were also aroused by the gay male tapes. Researchers concluded that strongly homophobic attitudes are associated with unconscious homosexual feelings.

Throughout history, a variety of psychologists have hinted at the connection between homophobia, hyper-masculinity and homoerotic behaviors. Freud suggested that institutions such as the army and the church were held together by the suppression of libidinal energies. Feminists have echoed Freud's work through their assertion that war allows for the expression of repressed homosexual feelings. According to Wilhelm Reich's "sex-pol" theory, authoritarianism and violence find their roots in repressed sexuality. The emphasis on male-bonding and dismissal of women and homosexuals that characterizes most military institutions lends further evidence to the various theories. Our nation's "don't ask don't tell" policy, supported by argument presented at the 1992 Senate hearings on the issue—that homosexuality undermines male bonding, "unit cohesion" in military settings—is equally illustrative of the theory.

-*Human Sexuality* by Simon LeVay and Sharon Valente (2003)
Global Sex by Dennis Altman (2001)
Virtual Equality by Urvashi Vaid (1995)



Feminism is the political theory and practice that struggles to free all women. Anything less than this vision of total freedom is not feminism, but merely female self-aggrandizement.

-Barbara Smith, from Trinh Minh-Ha's *Difference: A Special third World Women Issue*

Cutting Edge Beauty

Convinced it didn't get any worse than reality TV's *The Swan*? For those of us that feel cosmetic surgery hasn't become mainstream enough, hallelujah! there's a new Canadian magazine dedicated to it. Pick up your copy of *ENHANCE—Canada's only cosmetic enhancement magazine dedicated to men and women in the pursuit of optimum Beauty*—today.

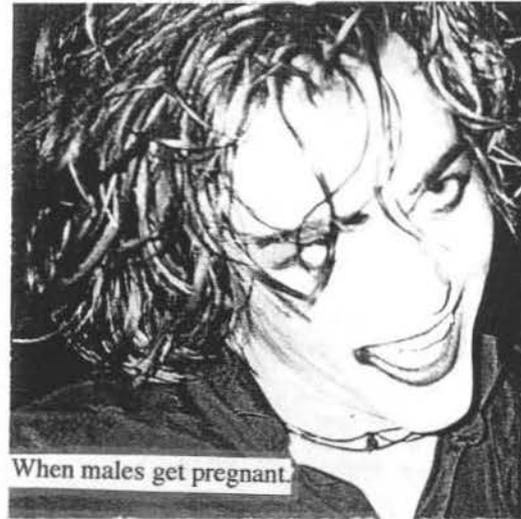


You have natural beauty.

Education and SEX

According to the NHSLS, a national survey of sexual behavior, relationships and attitudes conducted in the United States in the 1990s, the more likely they are to masturbate. The masturbation rate escalates proportionately as one climbs the academic ladder. Adults who have earned a masters degree are about twice as likely to masturbate as those who never finished high school. The study also revealed that the higher one's level of education, the more likely they are to engage in and enjoy oral sex. Class or sex, what shall I do?

-Human Sexuality by Simon LeVay and Sharon Valente (2003)



When males get pregnant.

Some of you may remember our last issue, in which a pregnant Charlie (above) modeled a stylish moo-moo. As it runs out, male pregnancy is not as uncommon as one might think. The sea horse is a species of fish which breaks all the rules. Not only does it stand up vertically in the water while most fish sit horizontal, among sea horses it is the males that get pregnant. While the production of the egg still rests with the female, once the egg is ready she then deposits it in a deep pouch-like cavity in the body of the male.

-Human Sexuality. Simon Levay and Sharon M. Valente



WORDS TO LIVE BY

"You say you're supposed to be nice to the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians and the Methodists and this, that and the other thing. Nonsense. I don't have to be nice to the spirit of Antichrist."

-Pat Robertson, *The 700 Club*

"(T)he feminist agenda is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians."

-Pat Robertson, *The Washington Post*

"I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle... I point the finger in their face and say 'you helped this happen.'"

-Jerry Falwell, speaking about the 9/11 terrorist attacks, *The 700 Club*

5 Oct 1995: "What this says to me is that too many whites are getting away with drug use. Too many whites are getting away with drug sales. Too many whites are getting away with trafficking in this stuff. The answer to this disparity is not to start letting people out of jail because we're not putting others in jail who are breaking the law. The answer is to go out and find the ones who are getting away with it, convict them and send them up the river, too."

-Rush Limbaugh, who, after entering rehab three times and publicly admitting to drug addiction is now attempting to seal his medical records to avoid prosecution.

Missy Manners, former congressional intern to Utah Senator Orrin Hatch, speaks about her decision to go into the adult film industry. "I moved to California, and I would go to aerobics every single day, and there would be these pretty blondes again, so skinny, great suntans, perfect teeth. After a while I looked down at myself and realized I had better tits and ass than these women. If you really want to know, I get off 10 times more than most women do. I'm not one of those people into orgasm retention, like one a year. I could have 10 great ones in a day and not feel guilt. The way I look at it, I'm still a good republican. I worked hard to get Reagan elected, twice. I consider myself the Pat Robertson of porn. This is my fight for individuals rights. Once I was a freedom fighter. Now I am a freedom fucker."

-Burning Desires, Chapple and Talbot



No sooner had I caught sight of the whole woman than Western marketing came blaring down

upon her with its vast panoply of spectacular effects, strutting and trumpeting the highly

seductive gospel of salvation according to the hipless, wombless, hard-titted Barbie. My strong

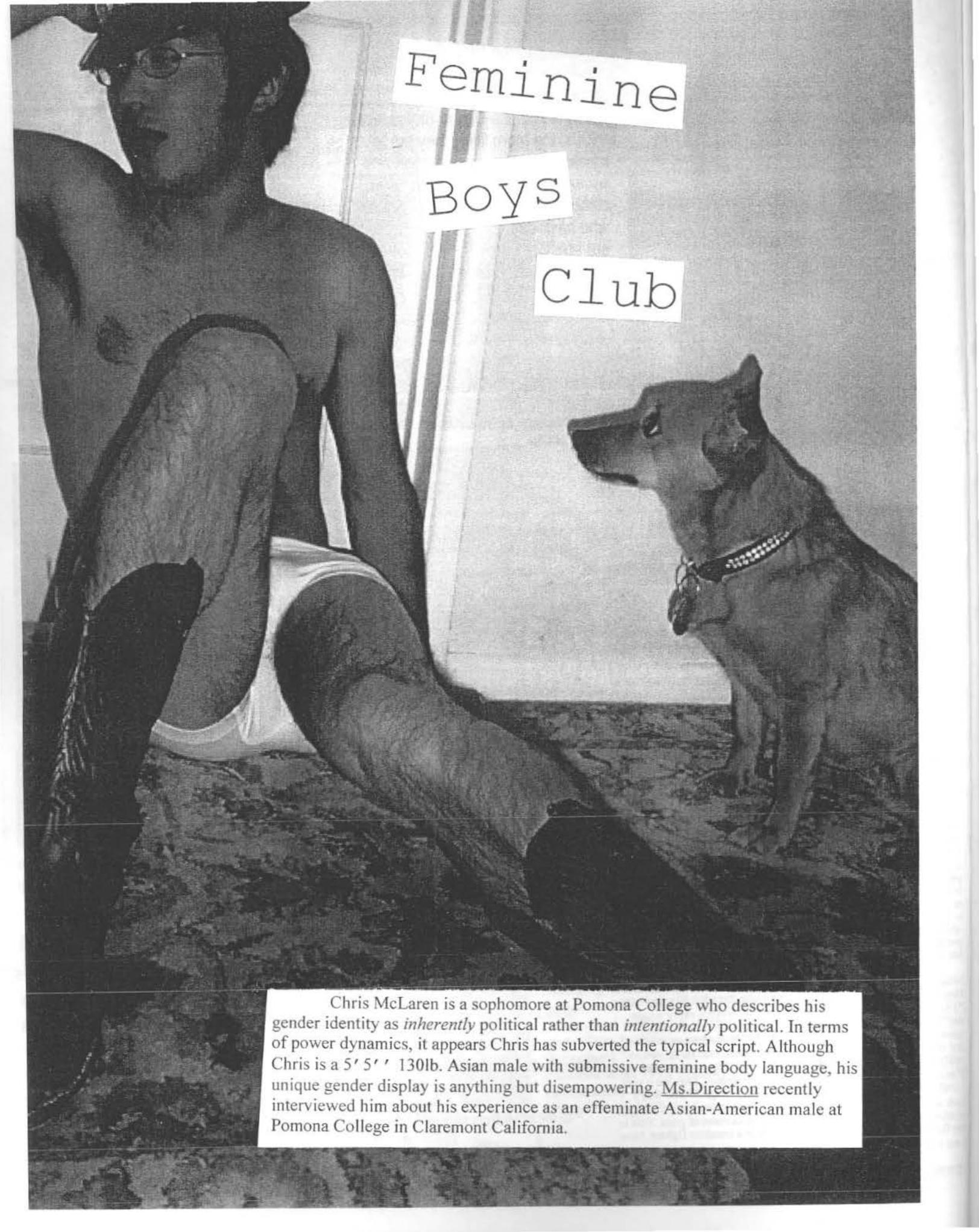
women thrust their muscular feet into high heels and learnt to totter, they stuffed their useful

breasts in brassieres and instead of mother's milk fed commercial formula made with dirty water

to their children; they spent their tiny store of cash on lipstick and nail varnish and were made

modern.

-*The Whole Woman*. Germaine Greer (1999)



Feminine

Boys

Club

Chris McLaren is a sophomore at Pomona College who describes his gender identity as *inherently* political rather than *intentionally* political. In terms of power dynamics, it appears Chris has subverted the typical script. Although Chris is a 5' 5" 130lb. Asian male with submissive feminine body language, his unique gender display is anything but disempowering. Ms.Direction recently interviewed him about his experience as an effeminate Asian-American male at Pomona College in Claremont California.

ASSERTIVENESS and aggressiveness, generally thought of as
"MASCULINE" qualities, and with these qualities,
power is easier to gain.

MS: How is your body a site of resistance?

C: Okay I am going to talk about the main reasons I am usually perceived as being gay, reason number one: wearing tight clothing and you know, effeminate clothing and things of that nature, my personal aesthetic doesn't rely so heavily on, you know, like flannel and baggy cargo pants, things of that nature. I like to wear clothes that actually fit me, and being unfortunately a fully grown male who is like 5'5" and weighs 130 lbs., half of my clothes are women's or youth clothing, and I guess that is inherently political but at the same time it's because I can't get clothes that fit me in most men's departments, it's really kind of terrible.

So, okay tight pants—it's really interesting at this point that guys who wear tight pants are seen as being really effeminate and therefore gay, because, rewind the cultural clock to like the 70's when everyone wore skin-tight painted on jeans, and those were like the straighter than straight guys, this is just all cultural context, I mean look at Europe and it's much more—no one in Europe wears baggy pants now, it's a fact I swear... for the most part people were trimmer fitting clothing. I wear lots of pink and purple and things like that and these are traditionally effeminate colors and that's perceived as effeminate and therefore gay again, because our culture doesn't allow much leeway for effeminacy for heterosexual males. It's ridiculous, pink and purple are colors that don't really mean anything, I guess that is somewhat of a redefining, recontextualizing cultural symbols. A lot of times because I am so involved with queer issue stuff, I work at the queer resource center and in high school I was involved with GSA, the Gay Straight Alliance we had, I guess this makes me perceived as being gay because apparently if you are involved in a special interest group than that special interest has to be self interest, but that's really not the case.

MS: Do you feel anyone treats you more differently as a more "feminine" male?

C: I'd say yes, for a lot of straight girls, they assume that I'm gay and in that case treat me like "one of the girls", which can get really annoying. Others, if they recognize that I'm not gay still treat me more like a girl than a guy, and I guess that's okay, I'm not sure how I even feel about that. I think a lot of straight guys, especially, stereotypically straight, heterosexual masculine males, don't really know how to react to me. I was at a party a couple of weeks ago and this guy was like, "So you are homosexual right?" I mean that kind of sums it up, they don't really know in what way they should be interacting with me because they don't really get it.

MS: I am interested in what you think about mannerisms and body language—in terms of your own and that of others—as they relate to socially constructed gender norms. How do feminine/masculine and homosexual/heterosexual binaries compare in this way?

C: First to talk about mannerisms in terms of what I do and in the context of this interview—you know, typical leg crossing and pigeon-toed posturing, I wouldn't say I'm guilty of excessive limp wretched-ness, you know a little here and there. A lot of times I act really coy, a lot of times on purpose. Things like that, in some ways you could say posturing as a girl. Last night was this gender blender party and we all dressed in drag, and dressed as a girl I didn't really have to adjust any of my mannerisms, and dressed in my clothes and makeup, I didn't have to adjust any of my mannerisms and I looked so much more incredibly fem than the other guys, it was kind of weird, which illustrates one of my points maybe. In terms of how mannerisms relate to these socially constructed gender norms, they are an outward signifier, a learned signifier.

It's interesting how the limp wrist is the iconic body language of gay male culture, I don't know how that came to be but if you try to deconstruct the limp wrist it is vulnerability, it is weakness. That was iconic of women, in decades earlier, and I guess as a reappropriated signifier that was taken up by the gay movement, now at this point in our culture the stereotypical limp wrist movement is far more associated with homosexuality than it is with femininity, it's I guess recontextualizing these gender norms. If I behave in a certain way that is typically associated with women or queer people and I'm actually neither, than it makes people think a little more.

MS: In terms of body language, what are the subtle ways we give and take power?

C: Obviously we give and take power through how open and closed we are in the ways we present ourselves, how vulnerable we make ourselves, and typically the ways in which we take power is by asserting yourself and by being "masculine." You give power by presenting yourself in a "feminine" posture. So the question is for me to present myself in typically vulnerable ways, does that mean I am necessarily giving power? I don't feel like I am, and I can't exactly put my finger on why, but I think it's because we have, in some socioeconomic studies they talk about "overriding characteristics," where a lot of time's race. If you are white, even if you're underprivileged in other ways your whiteness is going to define who you are in a lot of ways and for me, my maleness still defines who I am. Whatever body language I use, I don't think the body language in and of itself will not negate the power given to me as a male by our society.

MS: How do you situate your gender identity in terms of class? How does class enable or constrain gender play?

C: I am a member of the upper middle class, and I have had a fairly privileged life, I think I would say that privilege enables gender play; it gives you a freedom to express yourself. One concrete way of explaining this is I went to public schools up until eighth grade, which were terribly intolerant misogynistic environments. While I was there I tried more than anything to be average and not draw any attention to myself. But then I went to a private high school where diversity was embraced much more, and there, especially towards the end of high school, I could start presenting myself in different ways and not fear condemnation or physical assault. I mean certainly people who are not privileged still practice gender queering, especially for people where it is not so much of a choice—for trans people where it is part of their identity—it's not a choice for them, but like in many other cases, economics do serve a role in this I believe.

MS: And then in the context of racial identity: Do you feel your own atypical gender identity—feminine male—in a sense subverts and/or expropriates the popular Western racial stereotypes (feminine East/Masculine West, feminine submissive impotent Asian male)?

C: As an effeminate heterosexual Asian effeminate male, in terms of how race and gender identity intersect, it's not so much subverting the notions of the effeminate, impotent, weak Asian male, but in a sense it's reclaiming it by marking it in a different sense. Because the stereotype of the effeminate Asian male, the effeminacy is in that sense due to what's perceived a weakness in the race, whereas for me it's much more of a conscious choice that is based in gender politics. In that sense it's reclaiming Asian male effeminacy through gender politics. For me, it's less of a race issue.

MS: I think the work you're doing is great. Thank you.

Open your minds, people. Try to look beyond the physical. Try to accept differences and unique qualities in others. Things aren't always in black and white. Embrace the gray, too.

Fuck-Marriage Consumer Treat

Are you a twenty-first century feminist with a soft spot for self-indulgence? What/who exactly do you consider your *best friend*? Do you need to spend thousands of dollars on a piece of jewelry from an industry that has a record-breaking number of human rights violations to express the "strength, success and independence" you possess as a woman in a capitalist patriarchy? I mean c'mon, who needs marriage to blow a few grand? Just check out the website of the Diamond Trading Company, where one can pick up on the latest trend in consumer gluttony, the right hand diamond, created for those women who don't need much more than a Visa with a hefty credit limit to make a "political statement." *Women of the world, raise your right hand!* the ad boasts. Would they be referring to the millions of women living in poverty across world? Maybe the women specifically working in the diamond mines—living in shantytowns and rooting out diamonds amid asbestos? The women of the world with platinum Visas? That diamond sure looks nice with her honey blonde highlights...

THE FATTENING ROOM

Among the Annang people of southeastern Nigeria, beauty aesthetics in terms of body size vary greatly from that of the West. Since the majority of the female population is thin—undernourished because of a lack of calorie-rich food—fat women are considered the ultimate in beauty; yes, the obeser the better. Before a girl is married, she is secluded in a "fattening room" for a period, months or even a year. During this time she is called a *mbobo*. Her duties include eating three calorie-rich meals a day (probably yams and rice) and learning about her future duties as a wife. At the end of this period there is a festival during which all the *mbobo* of the village paint their bodies and dance naked to flaunt their fatness. The heavier the woman, the more desirable she becomes, and the higher price her groom must make as a bridal payment. While this practice is presently declining in observance, fatness remains the ideal for West African women, to the point that some are willing to jeopardize their own health and well being in its pursuit. When food is not available, some women ingest animal feed or use corticosteroids, drugs that produce a rather unnatural looking and toxic obesity.

Source: Human Sexuality by Simon LeVay and Sharon M. Valente



Bikini Incandescence

Lynda Benglis is a talented gender fuck artist of 37 years running, beginning with her controversial appearance in a 1974 issue of *Artform* magazine with a dildo between her legs. One of her recent pieces, *Bikini Incandescent Column* is a subtle example of gender play, a large Chinese lantern which conflates a phallus with feminine curves, bikini island with bikini swimsuit. It is at once a silhouetted pin-up, a nuclear cloud, a dildo. Her entire collection is presently on display at the Cheim and Read Gallery in New York City.

Source: "Gender Fucks and Intimacy"
Tate Dougherty, Gay City News



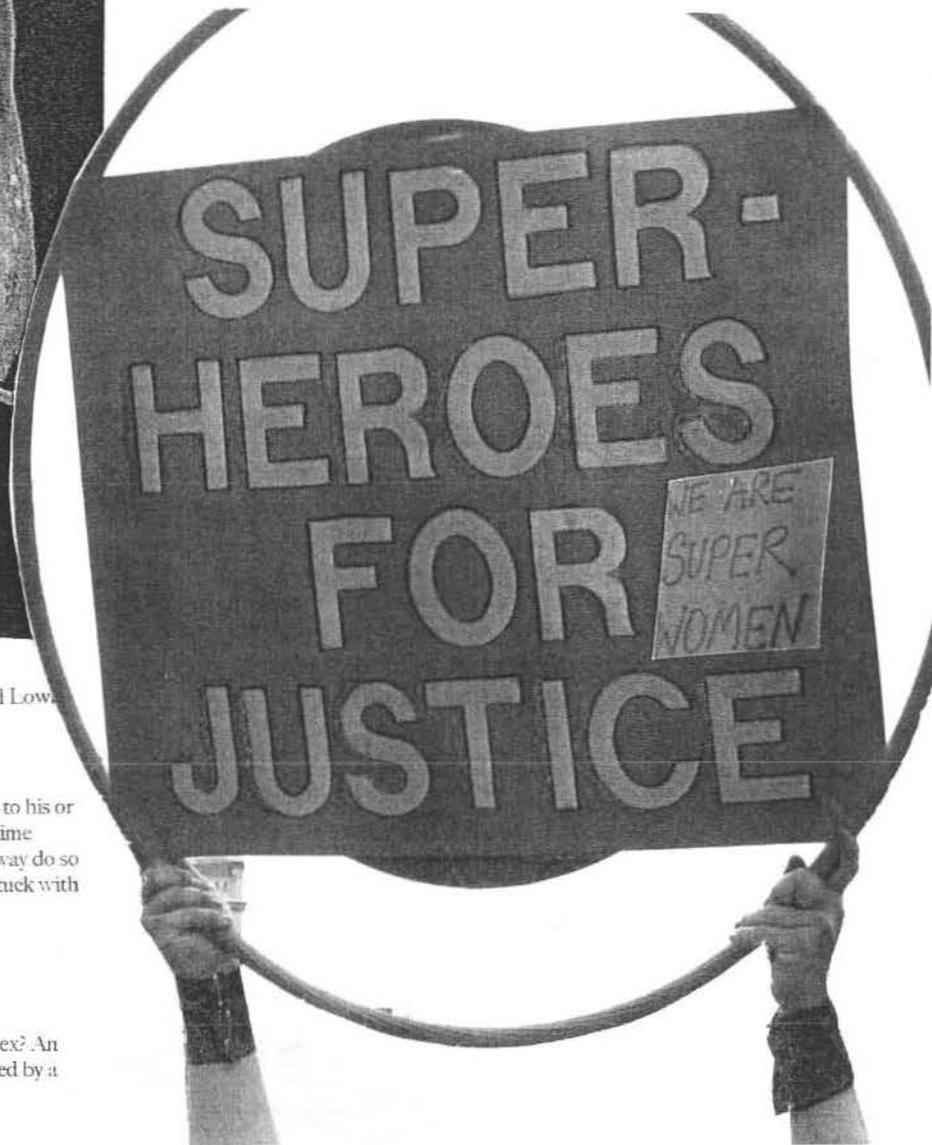
Much thanks to our copy-editor Jenny.

L♥VE



Chance that an American adult believes "politics and governments are too complicated to understand": 1 in 3
Chance that Americans who have been home schooled feel this way: 1 in 25
Minimum number of misleading statements on Iraq made by Bush Administration top officials since March 2002: 237
Days before last year's invasion of Iraq that Osama Bin Laden called Saddam Hussein a "socialist infidel": 36
Estimated percentage of French schoolgirls who wore an Islamic head scarf to school last fall: 0.02
Number of Holstein dairy cattle disqualified from Ohio State Fair last August for wearing a hairpiece: 2
Number of suspensions a Dallas-area high school handed out last fall for dress code violations: 1,116
Acreage of Christian nudist colony under development in Florida: 240
Minimum number of Italian men accused of paying for a "sexual anxieties" diagnosis to avoid military service last winter: 150
Percentage of 958 same-sex unions granted to Vermont citizens since July 2000 that have since been dissolved: 3
Percentage of U.S. heterosexual marriages that are dissolved within 5 years: 20
Percentage of U.S. companies that threaten to close the work site when faced with unionization effort: 51
Minimum number of Tennesseans who have ordered new license plates bearing the confederate flag: 3,000
Amount that Tom DeLay's political action committee spent at the Washington D.C. Hooters last November: \$117.19
Years in prison to which ex-Pentagon officials were sentenced last year for bribes of money and prostitutes: 24
Number of years a North Carolina man has been in prison for stealing a TV: 33

--Harper's Index, March 2004 (p 13)



Excerpts from *How to Make Anyone Fall in Love with You*, by Leil Lowndes

Technique #8 Sticky Eyes

Whenever you are talking with your Quarry, let your eyes stay glued to his or hers a little longer—even during the silences. A gaze that stays overtime awakens primal, slightly disturbing feelings. When you must look away do so reluctantly. Drag your eyes away slowly, as though they have been stuck with warm taffy.

Technique #78 The Hot Purr Response

How should you respond when you get your quarry talking about sex? An approving moan, a hot purr, and perhaps a naughty smile punctuated by a little licking of your lips is what X-rated Miss Manners suggests.

THE DIET TRAP

~Eating with Pleasure and Plenty~



Conditioning n. A process of behavior modification by which a subject comes to associate a desired behavior with a previously unrelated stimulus. Punching your kids in the face when you drive by Mcdonalds.

In a society that praises thinness over all else, it is easy to become a victim of the diet mentalities and judgments that pervade the mainstream consciousness. From the time we are able to make our own food choices, we begin to be conditioned by those around us, told which foods are “good” and which are “bad.”

Before I entered kindergarten I went to daycare every day after preschool with a woman named Lynn. I loved everything at her house; the *Choose Your Own Ending* adventure books, the hammock in the backyard, and the macaroni and cheese, which we ate every day without fail. One day, we didn't have macaroni and cheese. Lynn told us she no longer allowed cheese in the house because it was too fattening. This, including magazine articles, direct and indirect comments from friends and adults, radio and television ads and movies, among countless other experiences, have shaped my own less-than-pleasurable relationship with food.

The point is, it's nearly impossible to exist in the United States today and not have some messed up notions about food (assuming you have the means to provide yourself with food). As a whole, Americans have moved further away from the body's natural rhythms of consumption, turning to dieting and the cult of morally acceptable food choices that screw us up in the process.

From infancy we have the ability to feed ourselves in a way that nourishes our body and maintains an appropriate weight. In a study lead by Leann Birch, Ph.D., it was confirmed that when preschool-aged children are put in a room and allowed to make their own food choices without the interference of outside forces they eat in accordance with what their bodies need for growth. While at each given meal calorie intake and variety of foods was highly variable, over time things balanced out. Adult Americans (even those that don't diet,) seem to have lost this intuitive pattern of eating, falling victim to societal and familial pressures.

Today 45% of adults admit they feel guilty after consuming foods they enjoy. When a diet doesn't work we blame ourselves—surely it is our own slovenly behavior and lack of will power that has caused our diet to fail—heaven forbid we rationally accept that 95% of diets do not work. In truth, scientific studies are showing that diets fail simply because diets don't work. If everyone could go on the same diet and lose weight there would be no billion-dollar diet industry, no flavor of the month fad-dieting, no epidemic of obesity in America. ♥



GIRL?

By Theresa Molter



Why would you want to shave your legs? You're too young. They'll just grow back hairier. I never shaved my legs, you know, except for once when I was sixteen. Men don't have to shave their legs and women shouldn't have to either. But Mom, all the other girls do it. You're not all the other girls.

Don't watch that trash on TV. Some day I'm just going to throw that television out and live without it for a year or two. Why don't you read a good book instead of watching all that crap? You kids are going to rot your brains. Oh, not that book. That book is below your reading level. I want you to challenge yourself. Here, here's a good book to read.

You're not going to spend your money there, are you? Don't buy anything from that store. It's much too expensive. Brand names are not that important. You don't want to be a walking advertisement, do you? Don't buy that dress, it's not very flattering on you. You need something A-line, something that accentuates your curves instead of going straight up-and-down.

You can dye your hair pink in the summer, but I don't want you dying it during the school year. It might distract the other students from their work. I can't believe you are going to go out wearing that outfit. Isn't that the undershirt I gave you? You're wearing it as a tank top? Don't wear all that make-up, your skin is so clear and perfect. You're just going to mess it up. It looks so unnatural.

I want you to stay home this weekend and study for your finals. I don't want you out playing video games. You should be more focused on your studies.

You need to start wearing a bra with an underwire. You need more support.

Why do you want to dye your hair black? It looks so artificial. Don't you like your natural color? It's what you were born with, Goldilocks. Mom, I dyed my hair. Do you like it? I can't believe you dyed your hair. It's so chemical. Did you know you could get brain cancer from that stuff? And don't paint your nails inside, either, because the fumes will spread throughout the entire house and you'll kill all of our brain cells.

Are you doing your homework? You do want to go to a good college, don't you? Don't think you can get away with hiding things from me. Always be completely honest with me, because if you lie to me I'll inevitably find out anyway.

Don't get in the car with someone you don't know that well. Don't get in the car with someone who has had their driver's license for less than six months. They don't know what they're doing.

According to research at Devry University and the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, 10% of the American public is developing an unhealthy obsession with celebrities that can lead to depression, anxiety and psychosis.

-*"Just The Facts."* compiled by John MacIntyre Spirit 2004.



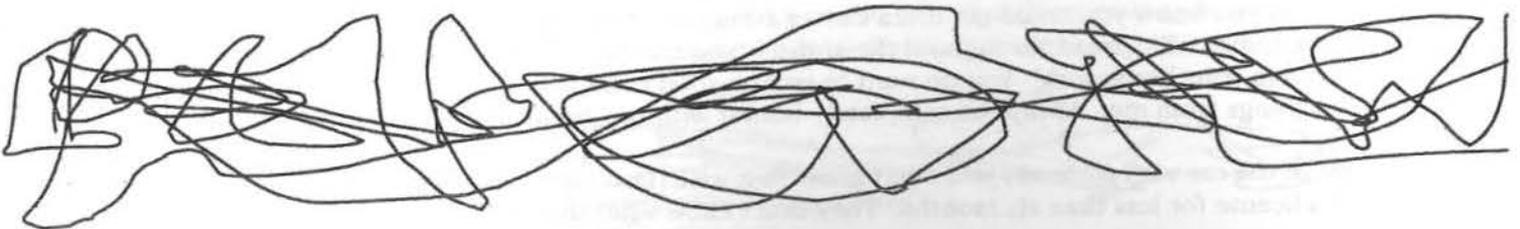
Indulgence n. The act or an instance of indulging; gratification: *indulgence of every whim*. Makes food sexy.

But what about gluttony? What about those *thin* people that can eat whatever they want and never get fat? As articulated in a recent issue of *Bitch* magazine, "Eating a lot—and especially eating a lot of junk food or red meat—has a kind of masculine sexiness too it." Reportedly, Cameron Diaz can't live without French Fries and Christina Aguilera lives off cheese. Katie Holmes lists Ben & Jerry's as her sixth favorite love. Everywhere from *Sex in the City's* summer 2003 (gasp!) pizza eating episode to Lara Flynn Boyle's love for food and Irish metabolism that keeps her trim, Hollywood seems to have adopted a *caloric indulgence is sexy* mantra. Take for instance the movie *Someone Like You*, in which Ashley Judd ridicules her pompous male friend for walking out on a date in which a "non-fat" woman ate ice cream in front of the refrigerator out of the carton. Just after Judd unleashes her feminist fury over the seductive consumption of last night's cold Chinese food, she then proceeds to recreate her high school cheerleading days, on the kitchen floor, in bra and panties (the catalyst to her future romance with womanizing male friend).

What is the message here? When is it okay to eat a lot and what exactly does eating a lot mean? Of course it is okay to eat tons of Chinese food and prance around in your underwear when you're a size two, but what if that women standing at the refrigerator eating ice cream really were FAT? If one can draw any conclusion from the latest Hollywood food frenzy it is that it is okay to eat a lot, as long as you are thin, but once you cross the line, you better watch out, because America is watching. Take for example the picture of Catherine Zeta Jones's (gasp!) eating her wedding cake, titled "Catherine-Eater-Jones", which she successfully sued over. At *Celebrities-Eating.com*, anyone can view candid photos of celebrities caught red handed with everything from French Fries to pizza. With captions like "Cameron! Chee-tos? For shame!" the web-site is a must see. Interestingly enough, just under the photos is an ad for a 48-hour \$23.95 Hollywood diet with money back guarantee. Three of America's keenest obsessions—Hollywood, the internet and food—make a scary combination. Needless to say, Hollywood's shallow yet strategically marketed attempts to heal its reputation as a leading player in the eating disorder epidemic is a bust.

Manifested in whatever manner—the obsessive dieter, the vegan propagandist, or the indulgent Hollywood skinny—Americas ideas surrounding food are fucked the hell up. When it comes down to it, disordered eating is not just about couch potatoes, rich white girls or models, but includes so many of us, from day care regulars to "biologically superior" males. So many of us have learned to manipulate our food intake in an unhealthy, disruptive and potentially life threatening way, utilizing food as a medium through which we can suppress anxieties and pain. The hope is that we can slowly loosen the grip of the diet trap, tear open our hearts and look at our desires and thirsts, eventually allowing ourselves to eat with pleasures and plenty-- when, where and how our body so chooses to do. ♥

Sources: 1) *Intuitive Eating* Tribole, Evelyn M.S., R.D. and Resch, Elyse, M.S., F.A.D.A. 2) *The Variabilities of Young Children's Energy Intake* L.L. Birch, S.L. Johnson, G. Anderson, J.C. Peters, M.C. Schulte, 1991. 3) *Eat Wave [Hollywood's New Gluttony Girls]* by Ricki Wovsaniker, *Bitch* 2004. 4) Pictures from *CelebritiesEating.com*





Convinced that the only reason your boyfriend doesn't look like Aiden is because your legs don't look like Carrie's from *Sex in the City*? Still bitter Rory from *Gilmore Girls* got into Yale and you didn't? Wondering why your girl next door doesn't look anything like Katie Holmes, or why your gay friend is not as stylish as Will of *Will & Grace*? Confused as to why there are no women of color in leading roles? Hollywood can't be racist if they gave Halle Berry and Oscar, right?

Nearly 64% of teenagers in America have a TV in their bedroom.¹ Statistics show that those who watch more television are more likely to project television's reality on to their own conceptions about the world, its people and how they function, whatever the background or education level of the viewer.² Today one or two companies own the majority of magazines, TV channels, radio stations and newspapers. Unfortunately, the views and realities presented in the media are narrow, one-sided designs of what is primarily a white heterosexual male power structure. Thirty minutes of television can change a woman's body image, signaling depression, anxiety, and self-loathing.³ The problem of anorexia did not evolve in Fiji until after the introduction of satellite television in 1995.⁴ Glamorized, (mis)representations of reality— were half of female media personalities meet the criteria for anorexia⁵ and anyone else who is not white, heterosexual and male is stereotyped or excluded—make up mainstream TV. Images centering around the white aesthetic and the invisibility of minorities not only makes one feel negative about oneself, but causes one to project this narrow dystopia upon the real circumstances and individuals one encounters.

¹ *Up From Invisibility: Lesbians, Gay Men and the Media in America* Larry Gross (2001)

² *Growing Up With television: The Cultivation Perspective*, George Gerber, Larry Gross, Michael Morgan, and Nancy Signorielli (1994)

³ Frank Boca Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

⁴ *Fijians Starving on TV-Rich Diet* by Erica Goode (1999)

⁵ USC Study, Kristen Harrison, Ph.D. (1986)

"There's an idea that there's this great mainstream, which may be wide but is shallow and slow-moving. It's the tributaries that have the energy." -Grace Paley

Racial Profiling and White Privilege

Post 9-11, the profiling of individuals of Middle Eastern and Arab descent became routine for police officers and airport control personal nationwide. Everyone who was Arab/had an Arab sounding name, specifically those containing Mohammad (probably the world's most popular name), or had any type of physical appearance that might appear racially ambiguous to the average underpaid and undereducated airport security monitor, was suddenly suspect. Not only is this merely a matter of overt racism, it is important to look at the entire framework of inequality that contributes to the irrational assumptions and stereotypes heaped upon minority groups. White people are never held responsible for anyone's actions but their own. After Tim McVay successfully committed the Oklahoma bombing, not one white man was singled out, questioned, or profiled. According to anti-racism speaker and activist Tim Wise, he was able to rent a Ryder truck, the same car McVay rented at the same establishment, and although he was a white male with short hair and in case you didn't catch it the same goddamn name, he was not bothered or even asked for a safety deposit. According to Wise, who identifies himself as "hardly a mathematician" when one takes the actions of 19 members of a group and uses their action to predict the actions of the group as a whole, one numbering more than 1.5 billion worldwide, this is called "sampling error." Unfortunately, sampling error seems to be a common problem among our governing body, one that leads to lethal consequences. When Bush couldn't find Bin Laden and decided to "free Iraq" instead, he aroused much confusion among knowledgeable Americans who questioned the connection between the 19 Middle Eastern Al-Quaida members from Afghanistan who bombed the twin towers and the leadership of a totally separate political entity and geographical region. Oh well, well over half of America's youth can't locate Iraq on a map anyway.

Sources:

Rationalising Racism: Panic and Profiling After 9-11 by Tim Wise (2002)

Challenging Racism speech by Tim Wise, Pomona College, April 12, 2004 Michael Moore, Pomona College, October 16, 2003.

Carbohydrate n. Serves as a major energy source in the diet of animals.

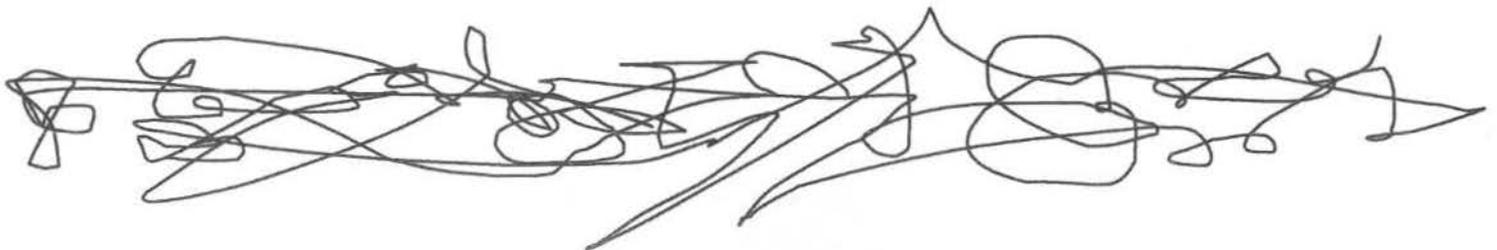
According to a heart study of 3000 women, dieting may lead to future weight gain brought on by the body's natural response to starvation (binge eating and decreased metabolism triggers this evolutionary response). In addition, the study showed that women whose weight yo-yos repeatedly as a result of dieting, regardless of initial weight, have twice the normal risk of heart disease and an overall higher death rate.

The new array of protein-rich diets appear to provide even more deleterious consequences. According to nutritionists Elyse Resch and Evelyn Tribole, low-carbohydrate diets cause the body to devour its own protein tissues as fuel. With each pound of body protein, 3-4 pounds of water are lost. Meanwhile the liver, lung tissue and heart muscle are all being burned as fuel. Prolonged fasting or carbohydrate deprivation results in a process called ketosis, where fat begins to be burned as used as fuel for the brain, along with the rapid loss of lean body tissue which will eventually lead to death. Suddenly it's much easier to tune out the Atkins buzz that has consumed the local health club; besides, low-carb bread?♥



Craving n. A consuming desire; a yearning. *More baby. Yes!*

Thought that just neurotic rich girls developed eating disorders? Consider a starvation study by Dr. Ancel Keys performed during WWII. Thirty-two healthy men, believed to be of superior mental and physical health, were selected as subjects. During the first three months of the study, the subjects ate as they pleased, averaging 3,492 calories daily. In the following six months, each of the men was required to lose 19-28% of their body weight depending on body composition, by cutting calories nearly in half. The effect on the subjects was enormous, and bears a striking resemblance to that of dieters. The men's metabolic rate decreased by 40%. They became obsessed with food, frequently talking about it, collecting recipes and reporting cravings. Eating styles changed, the men become ravenous and over preoccupied with food. Come meal time, some men played with their food for hours, others reported episodes of bulimia. One subject specifically reported a complete loss of will power, during which he ate several cookies, a sack of popcorn and a banana. Another broke all dietary rules, downing several milkshakes and stealing candy to satiate his cravings. Some men exercised obsessively to earn larger food rations, and most experienced symptoms of irritability, depression, anxiety and apathy. When the men were allowed to eat normally again, they found it difficult to stop, many of them partaking in 8,000 to 10,000 calorie binges. It took months to normalize their eating.♥



No, you cannot spend the night with a whole bunch of boys.

Don't chew your nails, it's unattractive. But Mom, you still chew your nails! That's not the point.

Why are you going out wearing that outfit? Boys are going to leer at you. No, that boy cannot sleep over. You might have sex! But Mom, he's gay. That's not the point.

Don't come home too late, you need your sleep. You have school tomorrow.

Are all of your friends gay? Are you going to have a party here this weekend? I don't want everyone drinking. It's illegal and it's very unhealthy.

You need to wait a year between getting your learner's permit and getting your driver's license. They give out those things way too early, and teenagers are much too impulsive.

Don't shoplift. If you do, don't get caught.

Don't go out and get drunk. I've never been drunk, you know. Not even tipsy? Well, a little tipsy. I don't see the point in it though. If you do get drunk, don't drive home. Never, never drive home drunk. When pulling out of the driveway, remember to check your blind spots so you don't run into the mailbox. Don't pull out of the cul-de-sac backwards, you might run into somebody driving the opposite way.

Your curfew is at midnight, just because the city enforces it, not because I don't trust you. Always call home if you're going to be later than you thought. I don't want to have to worry that you're lying dead in some gutter somewhere. You don't want me calling to look for you and embarrassing you.

Remember to drive the speed limit. Don't spend the night when you're taking out Dad's car, he needs it tomorrow.

Is that boy your boyfriend? No, Mom, he's gay. Remember? Are all of your boyfriends gay? Yes, Mom. Is his mother okay with you spending the night? Yes, Mom. Call his mother if you don't believe me, Mom.

Call home if you are going to change your plans. I don't think I'm asking too much when I ask you to do that.

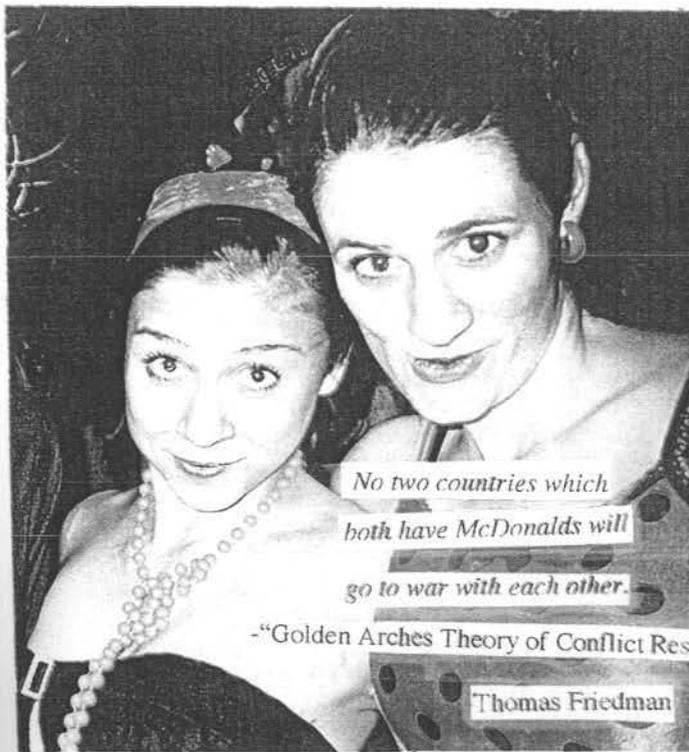
Why are you putting all that crap in your hair? It looks so stiff and plastic.

Who is that girl and why is she spending the night all the time? They taught you about safe sex in school, right? You know that you can mess around without actually having sex, right? So what are you anyway? What do you mean Mom? What do you think you are? Um, I don't know. You know, when I was in college I messed around with my girlfriends once in a while. It's a normal thing.

Are you looking for a summer job yet? You're sixteen, I think you need to take some responsibility.

Are we going to watch Ellen every week now that she's come out of the closet? Um, Mom, I have something to tell you.

It's okay baby, I already know.



Gender Diversion Kit #69

Inspired by the popular coloring book, *Boys will be girls will be boys...* gender subversion kit #69 is the perfect starter kit for the gender bending novice. Part poster, part zine and gender-fucking-fantastic, this kit is applicable in a number of environments, and includes a 23" by 14" two-color poster on the outside, and a gender queer coloring road map on the inside. The kit, a compact, mass produced version of the original coloring book by it and irit, who can be contacted colormegenderless@facehugger.com can be purchased at CrimeEthic.com in quantities of fifty for just two dollars!

"I get very tense around apples... Well, I get very tense generally. I think I've fallen into the trap of blaming fruit."

- Jeff, *Coupling*

The Vampire/Sunlight

one

...

vampire

nosferatu

ancient enemy of light

henchman of shadow

violent hungry parasite

you left a mark on my mind, and now you try

to visit me through it when I am weak

i see you sucking on souls wherever i go

i see your steely gaze behind the daily eye contact

i see your damage in the eyes of many

i see your kiss on the neck of this modern world

i feel your cold skin on every dollar bill

vampire

i hear your laugh in every wailing siren

blackeye woman you try to suck blood through my eyes, ears, and through my voice

and you think that in nakedness i am weak

but the opposite is true

for your love is a one way street

that always leads back to you

vampire women

who where bitten by the crafty bat during the peaceful sleep of innocence

and awoke in the ruins of their youth

bloody, torn flesh

fierce eyes

and starving to bite

touched by the bat, perverted uncle, fashion magazine kept in the dark

they hunt the purity that was taken from them at such an early age

i understand

and vampire man

who bit the girl

you were bitten too, fed on by the same flying shapes in the dark night

casting a shadow on your blooming soul sucking all your blood

then offering you a drink

be aware of who you feed, vampire man, for we all feed something.

yet be not afraid, for sunlight can reverse the vampires at dawn

it turns their pain into joy and fear into love

the way the night sky turns to day

and the land remains unchanged

yet aware of night

more awake and more alive

as one, we can turn this darkness into light, exposing the vampires in ourselves and becoming stronger

we can cast away the mouth of the hungry shadow

two

...

80 year old man, cold and alone

no one listens to the soul behind his voice anymore

go to sleep granddad

sshhh, crazy old man

sold his connection to people and the land that borne him long ago

he sold it to a machine that keeps him living on drip feed in a hospital bed

can't see the sunlight any longer

best to just go to sleep...

i believe

at the beginning and at the end

all in between

is sunlight

it feeds all plants animals

it is life

its voice is laughter

i hear that love and loyalty are foolish virtues in the demonic face of self-preservation

but i would rather die with this earth than forsake her for life elsewhere

i may be heavy handed

but i am not joking

for if you hear your heart beat coming from your chest only, listen closely and hear that it comes from the land around you as well

see,

i saw a tree kept indoors, growing sideways, pushing its branches against the window

insisting on sunlight

i saw

we grow in much the same way

arms out full of joy as the sun feeds all and asks for nothing

all around I see people who have sacrificed the natural joy, ecstasy and love that is inherent in the human spirit to the concrete iron deities of order, authority and convenience

i have met the shady devils who feed on the hearts of these people

with pointed eyes and jigsaw teeth

I have seen beautiful spirits who have grown large and tall as magnificent redwoods

souls with the meticulous perfection of a spider's web

filled with the silent concentrated knowledge of a mountain in meditation

and it is this which keeps our hearts beating in unison with each other and with the land

and it is this which woke me from the sleep i was drowning in

this which caused him to disassemble the suicide machine with the same hands that built it

this which caused him to put his energy back into his soul where true happiness is found

this which caused her to see the life outside of this town

this which caused him to see the life inside of this town

this which can knock down the walls of the mullock, which was built by the frightened hungry leper and his army of insects

it is this which does not blink at the sharp edges, corners, grids, charts, swords, cannons, and fangs of those afraid to stand without crutches

and it is neither gunfire nor bombs which will end this dark period of human history

it is the natural sunlight of the sky that will smother the seedy flames of hate and war

it was this notion that our country was founded on, one spark of inspiration in a period of darkness

which quickly fell back to the hands of the serpent that wraps himself around centuries

and hides in dark alleys

the serpent turned the spark into a fiery orgy of war, slavery, oppression, and slaughter of land and people.

but i believe the idea was there,

waiting to be enacted

freedom for all, not just the greedy

liberty for all, not just the rich and pale

beauty for all, not just the young

and it becomes ours again

you can't buy your freedom, and nobody is going to give it to you

it is something you have to find on your own

and others will join you

we won't need a constitution or a bible

once we all know what it means, once we reestablish the connection for all

once we all know the serpent's game

once we all realize the meaning of life is life and nothing else

that the best lives are full of mad joy, full of love

grow wild as oak branches

crazy as sunflowers

don't waste time worrying about fitting into an impossible mold

playing someone else's game

listening to the sound of horns blaring incessantly

falling asleep in front of the TV

as we step into tomorrow

stifled by darkness and blinded by light

in our nakedness we see where is light and where is dark

and in our nakedness

we are full

POEM BY BEN FORD-SALA

Performance Art for the Gender Fuck Revolution

Gender fictions are fictions of a body taking its own shape, a cut-up genre that mixes and matches body parts, sexual acts, and post-modern articulations of the impossibility of identity.... The end of identity in this gender fiction does not mean a limitless and boundless shifting of forms, rather indicates the futility of stretching terms like lesbian or straight or male or female across vast fields of experience, behavior and self-understanding.

-Judith Halberstam

Gender Fuck is a term that describes an individual's attempt to present strongly visible elements of both sexes—a wigged male in a mini-skirt and unshaven legs—in order to provoke an examination of gender assumptions within the viewer. Drag Kings and Queens represent an overwhelmingly visible and powerful driving force within the Gender Fuck Revolution. Drag is revolutionary in that it effectively exposes the discord between sex and performance, sex and gender, performance and gender—creating a mockery that delegitimizes hegemonic culture's claim to the pervasive myth of heterosexual coherence and essentialist notions of sexuality and gender. One emerging form of activism is gender performance art, pioneered by individuals such as Dred Scott, Kate Bornstein and Dame Collonica Drek. Gender performance art encompasses a wide variety of creatively theatrical acts, existing as a delicious parade of artistry, illusion and perversity across the playground of gender.

In a recent performance of her one-woman show, *Transfigured: Transmorphism in Performance Art*, Dred Scott visually explored the politics of gender fuck. By providing the audience with a glimpse into the "Dred Love Experience," the Haitian-American artist encourages in each person the construction of self-defined identities free of harmful stereotypes, inhibitions and prejudices. At the height of the show, in full gender fuck drag, Dred pulls a shiny red apple from her bulging crotch and eats it-- an act that forcefully probes one's notions of gender, sexuality, race and spirituality.

Kate Borstein, is a self-described, "gender outlaw", transsexual lesbian playwright and performance artist. In her latest piece, *The Opposite Sex is Neither*, she recontextualizes definitions of gender. In demanding that she not be read as man / woman / lesbian / straight, she (de)limits the terrain of identity, claiming to be some combination of presumably inconsonant terms.

In an act of gender fuck performance art that proves far more outrageous than the work of Borstein or Scott, Vasili Kapetanakis, alias Dame Collonica Drek, engages in public foreskin piercing. Dressed in his own anti-glamour, anti-fashion gender fuck bridal gown—tubes, steel wool, fly net, wire colored stones and spray paint—Drek performs foreskin piercing as an act symbolic of the reclaiming/celebrating of sexual and body ownership. Excerpts from a piece of his work explain the connection between re-claiming of the body and state/social control, "your phallic assaults, your desires to conquer as you prod and probe in the name of science and God to pacify and possess...I was owned by the roles you

demand I perform to sustain and maintain the machinery and the ideals of masculinity any empire provides to its soldiers to keep this great conquest alive." As a citizen of South Africa, Kapetanakis lives within a heavily Western-influenced post-apartheid state that maintains a system of rigid sexual and gender constructions. For Kapetanakis, breaking through the regulatory gender and sexual expectations of the hegemonic power structure is essential to his exploration of his own body and desires; exhibitionism becomes a performance ritual that symbolizes his not belonging.

This experience of not belonging, of existing as *other*, becomes an important space for critical transformation as well as feminist and queer based political agendas. Pushed to the fringes by the hetero-masculinist white patriarchy, any individual existing at this edge obtains an opportunity to move in and among the dominant cultural narrative, re-imagining new terrain of post-modern gender and sexual identities through the self-articulated, stylized art of existence.



Sources:

- 1) Wynzden, Madeline H. "Psychology of Gender Identity and Transgenderism" 2004
- 2) Halberstam, Judith. "F2M: The Making of Female/Masculinity" 1994.
- 3) Kapetanakis, Vasili. Annual Qualitative Methods Conference: "The Body Politic" 1996.

CHARM SCHOOL

Girl SWIRL

Never refers to plastic knife as silverware

She is a Bourbon Bouffant / a velvet rope /

A neurotic pastel post-it / pink faux dudette.

Carries books on head, with tea cream soda

Style charm and Shirley Temple shadows.

Chews gum out in crisp diagonal slices.

Chipped nail polish resembles wide-eyed

Perennial orchids. Ejects chicken from mouth

Into folded bleached napkin. Has placid play

Tough skin longing to see the outside, yellow

Yarn shoes, a lake of sappy tears and tickle toes.

Skin of cream glaze and chemical wisdom. Lips

Stitched together, almond eyes with soft silver lies.

White toaster picket fence dreams, ironing and

Steaming, hot tea to soothe the throat and sawing

To silence the mind. Calm little bride.

Swirl away

girl away

dream away

soak away

blow away.



Star Spangled Youth Orchestra

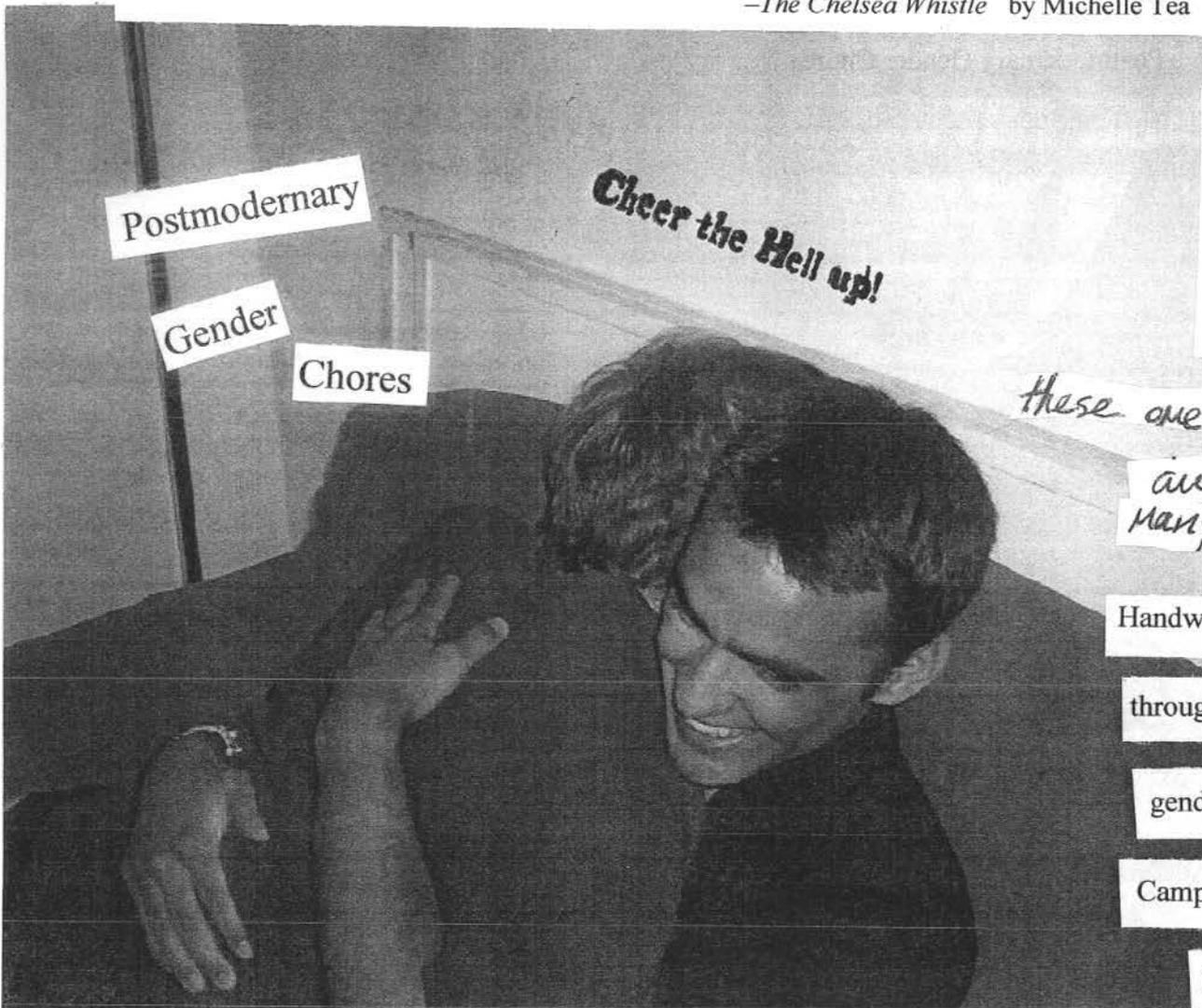
Created by Ben Ford-Sala and Nick Callaway, the *Star Spangled Youth Orchestra* is a grass roots Santa Rosa movement dedicated toward spreading joy and a message of non-violence. Making appearances at local events and weekly at the Wednesday night market down town, the Star Spangled Youth Orchestra adds *zang!* to any evening. Costumed in wearable art, playing drums, singing, passing out poetry and art, spreading smiles and laughter--the group uses art to resist the status quo and bring merriment to the lives of unsuspecting Santa Rosans. Ben, the unofficial group leader explained how he and Nick chose to keep the group apolitical, in order to spread joy and offend as few as possible. Regardless, with its patriotic name and red white and blue themed costumes. Ben and Nick interrogate the meaning and the expression of American Patriotism. In a recent appearance, Ben wore an American flag as a diaper, a healthy sized cow-boy hat and man on the moon silver boots. Prancing around, a skinny hopping blur of red white and blue handing out pieces of bubble wrap, he was able to redefine patriotism in his own lights, effectively parodying American culture. Through the creative appropriation of culturally significant symbols of American patriotism and freedom, his message of joy is laced with a subtle nod to efforts of social and political resistance. The group is accepting any and all members up for crazy shit and hopes to grow and evolve with time.

To get involved contact Ben: #799-0781 or benreliable@hotmail.com

"Republicans want to sell out their country to big business in a hurry. Democrats want to sell out to big business a little slower--and maybe toss a few sticks of chewing gum to admirers along the parade route."
 -Joseph Hart, *Adbusters* 2004

I decided I didn't really need underwear, no one did, it was another of capitalism's conspiracies.

—*The Chelsea Whistle* by Michelle Tea



masculine/feminine

*these are just labels,
and there are
many exceptions.*

Handwritten commentary

throughout provided by

gender-blender Johnny

Campbell, 14. Interview

by Izodia.

Like nothing of this decade, Le Tigre is an all girl eighties flavored rock band with a techno feel. If you like the Go-Go's, you will probably enjoy Le Tigre.

Self proclaimed "Electro-Feminist-Performance-Artists," their songs critique life with feminist rant lyrics. Song titles on this album include: LT Tour Theme, Fake French, FYR, On Guard, Much Finer, Dyke March 2001, Tres Bien, Well Well Well, TGIF, My Art, Cry For Everything Bad That Has Ever Happened, and Keep On Livin'. Band members include Kathleen Hanna, Johanna Fateman and JD Samson. JD has recently come out with her own JD's Lesbian Calendar. It features images of JD in several gender-bending poses including stable hand, tattoo artist, and pool boy. The photos are sexy in an unconventional way, challenging the reader to question their own definition of sexiness. The pictures involve various cultural references (think Baywatch) but are a far cry from indecent. Samson says the calendar is meant for the home or the office, as well as that, "It's accepted that this androgynous butch lesbian is the sex symbol in the calendar." The calendar draws attention to the role of lesbians in society ("Calendar Girl." Kat Long, Venus 2003)

F E M I N I S T



Moreover, Le Tigre's Cd Feminist Sweepstakes is a hit. Unfortunately, because it is independently produced, you may have to go farther than your average Sam Goody to snag a copy.

Lyrics to F.Y.R.

Ten short years of progressive change, fifty fuckin' years of callin' us names. Can we trade title nine for an end to hate crime? RU-486 if we suck fuckin' dick? One step forward, five step back. One cool record in the year of rock-rap. Yeah we got all the power getting stabbed in the shower and we got equal rights on ladies night. Feminists we're calling you. Please report to the front desk. Let's name this phenomenon. It's too dumb to bring us down. F.Y.R. fifty years of ridicule. F.Y.R. take another picture. It's too dumb to bring us down. F.Y.R. fifty years of ridicule. F.Y.R. take another picture...Mrs. Doubtfire on Mother's Day. On-the-job stalker for equal pay. Toss us a few new aids drugs as national health care bites the dust. While you were on vacation black people didn't get reparations. You know these days no one's exploited. Sorry dude can't hear ya with my head in the toilet. Feminists we're calling you. Please report to the front desk. Let's name this phenomenon. It's too dumb to bring us down. F.Y.R. fifty years of ridicule. F.Y.R. take another picture You've really come a long way baby. It's you, not the world, that's totally crazy. Cuz we really rocked the fuckin' vote with election fraud in poor zip codes. Celebrate gay marriage in Vermont by enforcing those old sodomy laws. We tell the truth they turn up the laugh track. Feminists we're calling you. Please report to the front desk. Let's name this phenomenon. It's two dumb to bring us down.

I told my mom I would come home and eat the pasta and broccoli and garlic if she could please use margarine and not butter, which was no big deal

because she used margarine anyway. It was as if caring about the world was some sort of destructive addiction,

I couldn't do it socially, like normal people. It was a huge obsession taking over my life,

every injustice leading illogically to a related and worse injustice until I was standing in the

center of a pulsating ring of pain

and torture and oppression and the only real

solution was just to kill your self.

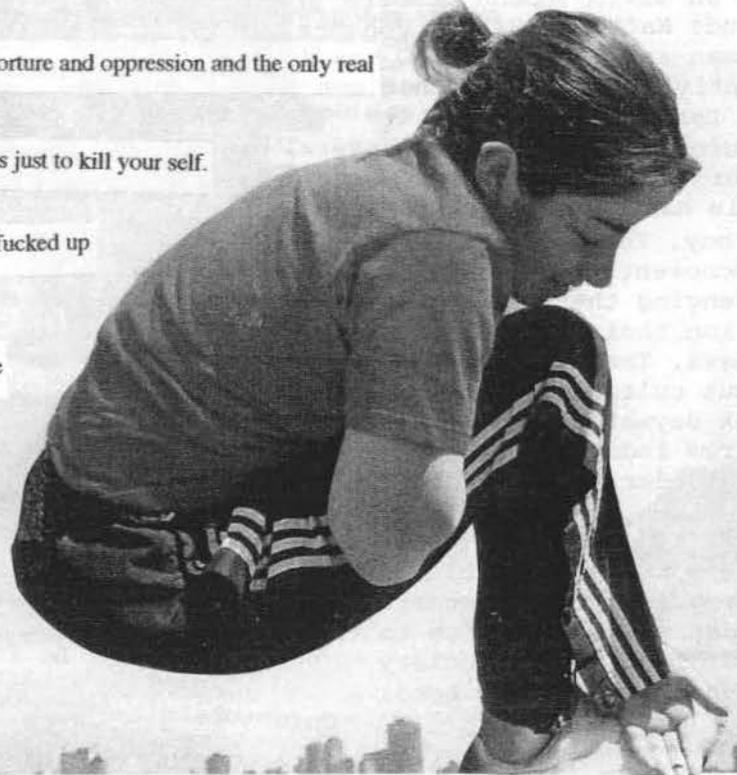
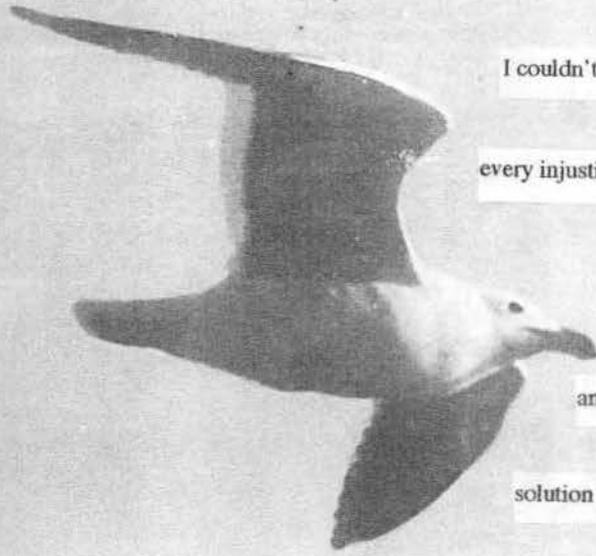
Just get off the fucking fucked up

planet. I couldn't do that, but I could whittle away at my existence

until it was simply immobile on the couch, eating raw organic

produce and doing

bong hits.



-The Chelsea Whistle by Michelle Tea

evAn

One of my fondest memories of Evan was the first day of Ms. Weinberg's class, junior year. On paper, our class was exactly like every other high school AP English class. There were thirty or so extremely talented students, a ridiculously huge textbook, and an infectiously enthusiastic teacher. One slight difference made our class a little different: it just so happened that approximately ninety-five percent of the class was women. Sitting there was a hoard of confident, maybe even intimidatingly intelligent, females in the AP English class. Evan was one of three young gentlemen in the class. But, you would never know it. The other two young men awkwardly laughed and fidgeted during introductions. Evan sat there beaming. That was what Evan was like. He calmly accepted his surroundings with a serene, carefree attitude.

I went to sophomore Turnabout with Evan. I had never asked a guy anything, not even to borrow a pencil in math, nonetheless to attend a semi-formal school function, with me. I was utterly petrified. I think I tried talking each last one of my friends into asking him for me. You know, my friend could pass his friend a note with my number, etc., etc. They all refused, basically shoving me in Evan's general direction, screeching, "Just aaaaask him already." I walked over, with my pulse jumping out of my body, asked, and waited for the tricky high school politics to settle in. "Sure." Calm, sure of himself.

Evan lived more in his short lifetime than many people live in a more full life. Evan was genuinely kind. Evan completely ignored each and every social law set up by petty high school cliques. Even if I hadn't spoken to Evan in three weeks, he would come up to me as if he were just finishing off the conversation we had left off three weeks ago.

BY ALLEGRA HARRIS

Giving Feminism a Bad Name

Unfortunately, the history of feminisms in the United States is incredibly problematic. Not only did first and second wave feminism universalize the position of the heterosexual white female—overlooking differences of class, race, sexuality and ability that shaped the varied experiences of real women—a lot of feminists said a whole lotta fucked up shit.

[Men are] mutants [who may like other mutations] manage to kill themselves off eventually.”

Mary Daly, quoted in OOB, 1979

[The] proportion of men must be reduced to and maintained at 10% of the human race.”

Sally Gearhart, “The Future—If There is One—Is Female” (1982)

Women can get themselves off the hook of the contraception dilemma...[as] spinsters, women who choose to be agents of be-ing, [and elect] misterectomy.”

Mary Daly, *Gyn-Ecology* (1978)

A case could be made that lesbianism, in fact *all* sex, is reactionary, and that feminism is revolutionary... Because lesbianism involves role-playing and more important, because it is based on the primary assumption of male oppression, that is, sex, lesbianism reinforces the sex class system.”

Ti-Grace Atkinson, “Lesbianism and Feminism” (1978)

Straight women are confused by men, they don't put women first. They betray lesbians and in its deepest form, they betray their own selves. You can't build a strong movement if your sisters are out there fucking with the oppressor.”

Kita Mae Brown, “The Shape of Things to Come” (1976)

Male sexuality is] the stuff of murder, not love.”

Andrea Dworkin, “Why So Called Radical Men Love and Need Pornography” (1980)

Many women have the capacity to abstain from sex without negative psychological consequences...[their] capacity for abstinence, repression, or suppression [has] adaptive advantages.”

Phel Person, “Sexuality of the Mainstay of Identity: Psychoanalytic Perspectives” (1980)

All transsexuals rape women's bodies by reducing the real female form to an artifact, appropriating this body for themselves.” This lesbian-separatist cautions accepting transsexuals into feminist communities because she fears they will “seduce” feminists back into heterosexuality.”

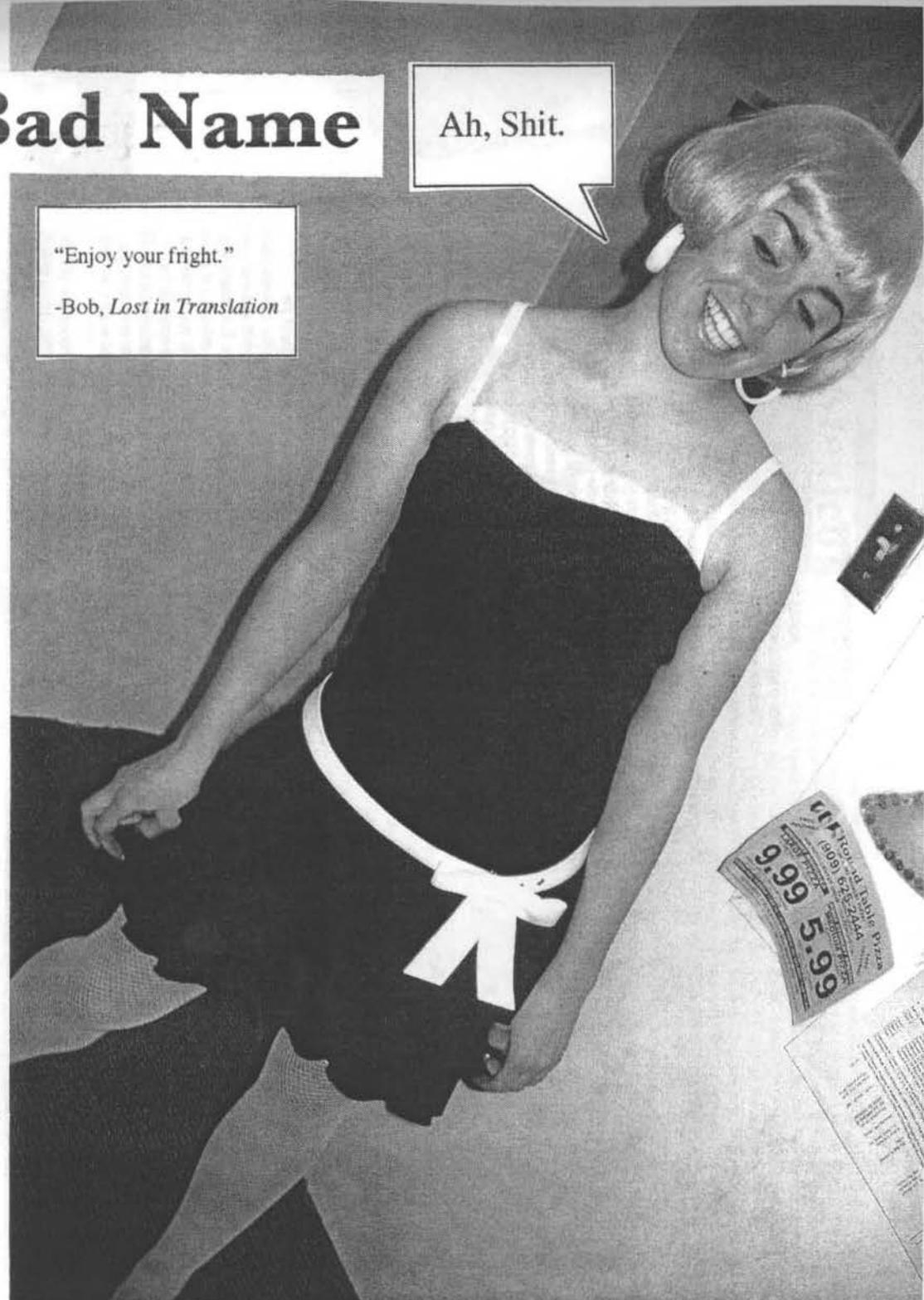
Janice Raymond, “The Transsexual Empire” (1979)

Sexual slavery lurks in the corner of every woman's life.”

Lathy Barry, “Female Sexual Slavery” (1979)

“Enjoy your fright.”
-Bob, *Lost in Translation*

Ah, Shit.



Gender Smashing



By Kevin Dewesse

From: Joshua@joshuahardcore.com
To: Kcercone@scrippscol.edu
Date: Thursday - April 8, 2004 4:54pm
Subject: Ms.Direction article

An excerpt from my "to do" list sticky notes, added two days ago...Write about: gendersmashing bisexuality voting for Kerry.

We'll see, stay on my ass like a white patrolman tailing a black activist in Mississippi and maybe I'll actually write something.

K

From: Kcercone@scrippscol.edu
To: joshuah@joshuahardcore.com
Date: Saturday - June 5, 2004 2:59pm
Subject: Re: !

Dear Kevin/volatile-lovesick-scum,

Your deadline has passed bucko. This whoa-begotten editor is burnt out, flaming, crispy, tired of your snoozing around. Not even sexual favors can get you out of this one homelice.

xoxoxo,

Katie

A: Scratching the Surface

Across the spectrum of sexuality, tightrope between hetero and homo was once a lonely art. If anything, this seemed to support the idea that the ends were rightfully placed, that their weight of population would hold the abnormal middle high in the air and away from serious consideration.

But lately, the balancing act has become crowded. You can see it in the train of letters that follow Lesbian and Gay at events celebrating sexual diversity. Bisexual, transgender, gender queer, bois and girls, pansies and metrosexuals rolling into the station on their whistle stop tour of respectability. The considerable amount of weight now placed upon the tightrope questions the value of continuing to acknowledge the accepted placement of homo and hetero as the defining anchor stores in the mall of sexual attraction.

But the established Hetero population would deny the validity, and often the very existence, of variation in sexuality is understandable. Any power structure will act to preserve that power, with oppression and derision being the most effective and accepted method of doing so. To judge harshly would be premature, as these actions are the collective reactions of the mass population rather than any specific members within it. Often their knee jerk movements are based upon their inability to perceive the situation in any way other than their own. Their power thus preventing them from empathizing with "the other." Perhaps less heartening is the Homo population's perceived need to ridicule the middle in order to strengthen their linear polarity against the perceived hetero normality. This linear polarity chosen by the Homo side of the coin, seeks to gain acceptability for themselves by attaching to, and reaffirming the original sense of normality that is the Hetero's claim. What the Homo polarity fails to realize (or chooses to ignore in the face of a perceived gain in legitimacy) is that placing themselves in a space against the established power of the Hetero majority, simply reinforces the claimed power of that majority. To stand opposite and claim that spot as valid and one's own requires the validity of that which you stand against. Rather than establish a new form of power and validity, this method suffices with a reflection of power as their own, even though the very definition of that power is oppressive and denies any variation. The growing existence of a middle screams the possibility that to stand at either end is to deny aspects of the specific self. As more people decide to replace general answers with specific questions, the tightrope of sexuality bends in the middle from the increased weight; the end posts, in their weakened state, begin to uproot.

Both sides perceive the need to choose one side or the other in an effort to restrict what is considered normal. This choice serves to focus their sense of general identity at the expense of specific identity. The grey of the middle approach leaves too many questions unanswered, or rather, too many answers that do not fit into the linear understanding of sexuality.

As more and more of the population begin to accept a new delineation of normality, the previously accepted definitions of that normality begin to crumble. Because the rules of linear sexuality deny the existence of variation, the presence of an increased amount of variation should force us to reevaluate those basic assumptions about sexuality as a whole.

Here lies one of the problems with the homo/hetero spectrum. The more it is questioned, the more it becomes apparent that the defining rules of the spectrum of sexuality are based upon an exaggerated connection between sex and sexuality. If we separate the varied connections within sexuality from the dual nature of sex, there is little reason to restrict the understanding of sexuality along the similar dual lines. It becomes valid to suggest that linear sexuality is nothing more than a linear understanding of the subject's physical sex. With sexuality no longer present in that linear equation, it becomes necessary to create a new understanding of the directions and edges of sexuality.

In this, no aberration of the middle exists; there is no middle because there are no preset ends. Without ends, sexuality can be understood to rely on much more than the simplified concepts of body attraction and thus, the accepted directions of sexual movement begin to shoot in as many directions as embers from a campfire. (cont.)

Most of my life, I've thought I would rather be a boy. When I was about 3 would tell people I was a "boy-girl". I actually think I'd rather be completely androgynous now. As a girl, I think people don't expect me to act in a "tough", "masculine" way. I will always be myself, "masculine" or "feminine".



I can see now that this was always a story waiting to be told. The night we met, I was looking for someone to buy me a drink. I had already seduced a fifty-something with a gold band on the correct finger. Chicago, he said.

I met Mark some time into the evening. Midnight or so, I suppose. Emily and I walked by, playing the whole giggle and point game. Later, I find out, he was attracted to her initially. After our first walk through, we ditched Chicago for a table of twenty-somethings with glasses, previously engaged in a debate surrounding Radiohead's best album. He claims I sat on his lap. I claim there was very little couch space. From then on, there were several apple martinis, a call to his friend. He told his friend, sorry see ya later, game on.

He tested me. Didn't understand why I wasn't responding. Decided my name was not Mandy after all. Decided I was not yet twenty-one, or twenty, but a young and supple nineteen. Decided I had a boyfriend, and that explained, if only partially, why I was such a ridiculous tease.

Sleazy diner: no free milkshakes. You bought the homeless woman food. Smoke, smoke, smoke. Then the deciding factor, where she goes, I go. To someone's house. Piled in a car, your driving was frantic, a little drunk still, your nicotine high powering the Nissan.

Slow down. Music, emo versions of all the songs I thought I loved. You tell me that these guys are rich. Huge house for two twenties in S.F. They are in computers, you say. Then we slept on the too small couch. Upon further kissing and squirming we both decided perhaps the even smaller couch would be more comfortable. You couldn't stop touching me. I was not objecting. We talked about you, about my life, but none of the complications, yet. We'll always have Mexico. We won't stop.

Morning, one hour of sleep. Talking all through the night. We decide to exchange numbers. Not exchange, you give me yours. I will call if I deem the situation appropriate. You e-mail a letter stuffed with regret of the night I let myself go. Of course, I call the next day.

BY ALLEGRA HARRIS

B: Cleaning Beneath the Nails. *(gender smashing continued)*

There is a common question, "How can you know that you are bisexual if you haven't had intercourse with both sexes?" An obvious response is to compare the virginal bisexual to the virginal hetero or homo. There is no question as to the desire of the latter. Therein lies the problem of the subconscious understanding with the linear model of sexuality. It is one thing to be attracted to another, yet a separate thing to be attracted to just their physical parts. To exist in the middle of the sexual spectrum, one must let go of character, knowledge, and the myriad of other aspects of humanity, to simply spin around with their eyes closed, body heat acting as the final sexual divining rod.

The fact of the matter is simply that no one is attracted only to a sex. Time shows that one's sex isn't particularly fulfilling. It becomes the character and experiences that grow from the individual's sex that stimulate. Beyond animal attraction, longevity attaches itself to the complexity of personality, forcing physical sex into the background over time as something connected to the person, rather than the other way around.

These are obvious statements. Yet it seems from time to time that the obvious statements are loath to be made. They chip away at the grand lack of detail in the larger picture. Much like pigments in a painting, the dot of green within ocean blue may not be noticed, but it still remains, adding or subtracting in its own complex understated way.



Subscribe to Ms.D

get a one year subscription (3 issues) for \$9!

print name and address here:

send to: Ms.Direction c/o Katie Cercone,
1030 Columbia Ave. b #226 Claremont, Ca 91711

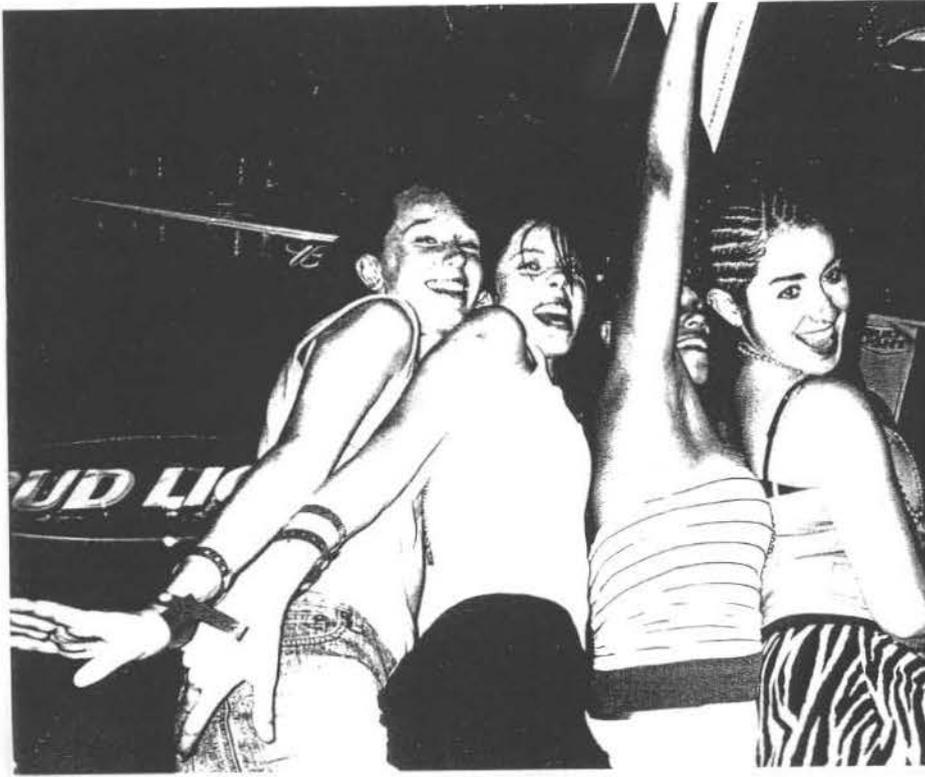


It's not getting what you want, it's wantin what you've got. —Sheryl Crow

POWERMONEYSEX

Smoking causes erectile dysfunction.

prostitutionprostitutionprostitution prostitutionprostitution



I believe that there are good grounds for the suspicion that the ice cream parlor, kept by the foreigner in the large country town, is often a recruiting station, and a feeder for the "white slave" traffic... I do not mean to intimidate by this that all the ice cream and fruit "saloons" having foreign-born proprietors are connected with the "white slave" traffic-- but some of them are, and this fact is sufficient to cause all careful and thoughtful parents of young girls to see that they do not frequent these places."

--"Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls," Ernest A. Bell in his 1911 self-published book.

"Having sex with these girls is the closest thing in the world to legally sanctioned child abuse, which is why Thai whores are the favorites of jaded men."

--The Lives of John Lennon, Albert Goldman

"At the age of 32 I decided to find a more honest profession than working for the Los Angeles police department. As people have become aware from the Rampart division scandal, the corruption has not gone away that I talked about 20 years ago. I felt like what I was working for, what I called the "Blue Mafia," and I felt that becoming a prostitute wasn't anything that I hadn't already done on the LAPD... I have no problem with multiple sexual relationships. I had plenty of them with cops. For free! When I decided to become a prostitute it was because I realized that in order to have people listen to me about police corruption I would have to make a powerful statement. My statement was: I would rather be a whore than work for the LAPD."

--Norma Jean Almodovar, author of From Cop to Call Girl. Court TV online transcript, Oct. 26, 2000.

In 1949, the United Nations adopted a resolution in favor of the decriminalization of prostitution, which has been ratified by fifty countries but not by the United States.

-Prostitutes' Education Network, Bayswan.org.

Thanks to AB 1035, a piece of legislation designed and passed by democrat Richard Katz in 1996, a woman with "an intent to commit prostitution" may be arrested. This applies to any woman occupying a public place, including a car, moving or not. Does this mean I should stop driving around in just my bra, waving at truck drivers?

HOOKERS IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

(Excerpts from an article that appeared in the French paper *Libération* June 3, 1975)

Monday morning, 10 am. After two hours of hide-and-seek with the police, 100 to 150 enter the church of St. Nazier, one of main churches in the center of Lyon, drifting into small groups. The action has been decided on four or five days earlier. Despite a few slip-ups, within minutes, right under the noses of three or four police squads, they are all inside.

*A first statement is quickly handed to the press. "We're here, and we're not moving." At that moment, every woman inside knows that the problems she faces will finally hit the headlines. She knows they'll be discussed, that she'll be able to say what she feels. The wall of silence has been shattered. Happy at the achievement yet respecting the building, they quickly organize the occupation * warm clothes, sleeping bags, cans quickly fetched to serve as ashtrays so as not to litter the floor, card games, etc.*

All the little chapels adjacent to the huge nave are taken over. The priest, Father Béal, immediately demonstrates that he's very co-operative and quite in favor of the occupation. "It's not for me to pass judgment on these women. They're asking for support, I can only give it. The church is really everybody's house."

*A banner is hung over the church facade, "Our children don't want their mothers to go to prison." Also, gradually, a new kind of relationship begins to develop between the 100 or so women assembled there * from choosing where to put sleeping bags to listening attentively to the radio for the repercussions of their action, and getting into heated discussions. Of course, for a long time now there has been a solidarity between them, but it's quite an extraordinary kind of community that's taking shape now.*

The morning of the occupation, two statements are given out to the press and to passers-by, a "Letter to the Public" and a letter to Giscard d'Estaing, President of France.

LETTER TO THE PUBLIC

We are mothers talking to you. Women trying to bring up their children alone as best they can, and who today are scared of losing them. Yes, we are prostitutes, but if we are prostitutes, it is not because we are deprived; it is the way we have found to deal with the problems in our lives.

Society is used to judging us, and pushing us into a ghetto of contempt or pity. We are treated as "dirty," "abnormal" women, and at the same time people say, "they're necessary."

Source: Prostitutes: Our Life, by Claude Jaget

Connor-

So for the record it's completely okay that you haven't called me for five days when you said you would see me tomorrow. I mean it's not as if I have thought about you non-stop since then. I really haven't thought about you at all actually, not about what I will get you for Valentine's Day or about what it would be like to kiss you. I haven't had 2000 hypothetical conversations with you in my head, ones in which I talk to you about my music tastes and favorite vacation spots, in which I tell you I have a friend that DJs too, because that would make me incredibly cool, then you tell me sweet everthings in flawless incredibly sexy Spanish and I melt into your arms and we spoon until three in the morning... but damnit I haven't been waiting by the phone and I haven't anticipated using you for experimental purposes in my human sexuality class or planned our long languorous spring break abroad. I haven't thought about our first date and I definitely haven't picked my wedding dress color or been to every bakery in town to sample wedding cakes. I mean its not as if when our mutual friend told me you said hi, AGAIN, I quipped back, he sure as hell better be saying hi! I am not desperate, maybe just quirkyalone and well, okay, finally adept at using my new pink vibrator — you give me one example of a heterosexual female that can sit through three hours of penis shots in human sexuality and not run back to her vibrator! All I would have to say to her is you crazy bitch! So anyway, I just wanted to let you know it is okay that you haven't called. I have known you liked me ever since the time you walked by me in the dining hall that day and didn't say anything. At the time I didn't put two and two together, but now I know that lustrous look was a silent communication of all your unlying love for me. So when you are ready to call I'll be here, not waiting by the phone checking my messages during my voice lesson and putting my cell phone on vibrate in the theater, just casually going on with the rest of my lovely amazing life, because I'm not obsessing over this one Connor.

Love, Jill

Alabama prohibits the use of sexual aids because, "the pursuit of orgasms by artificial means for their own sake is detrimental to the health and morality of the State."

Williams vs. Pryor, U.S. Court of Appeals 99-10798 (2001)



On March 25, 2004, I, along with over one

million others, assembled on the Mall in

Washington D.C. to protect a woman's right to choose.

The Pro-lifers came with signs

that compared abortion to the Holocaust and the war in Iraq, they gave their little children

pictures of bloody fetuses to raise high. They

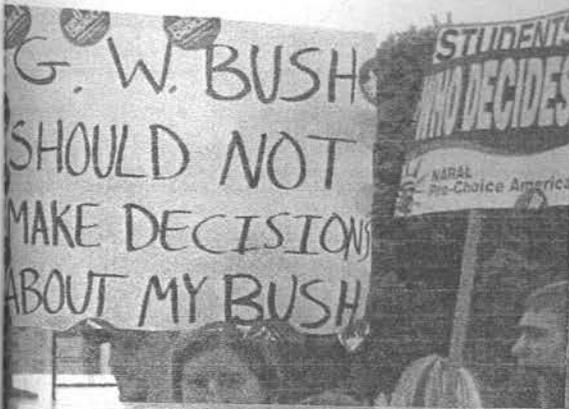
wanted to make it about murder. What I

witnessed was a sentiment

that ran much deeper than abortion;

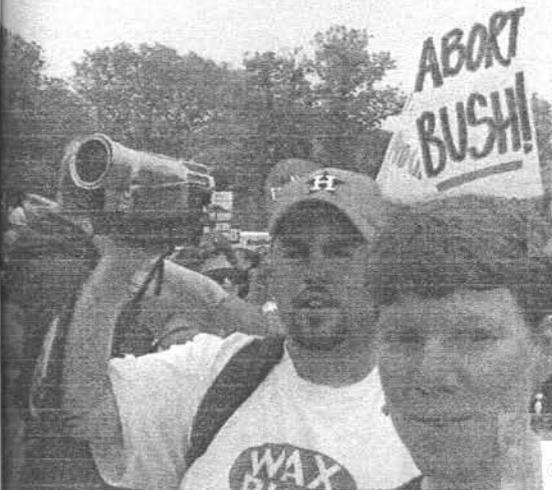
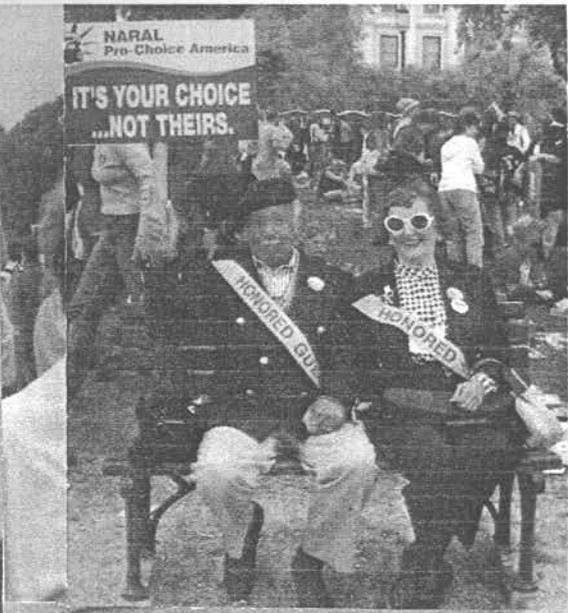
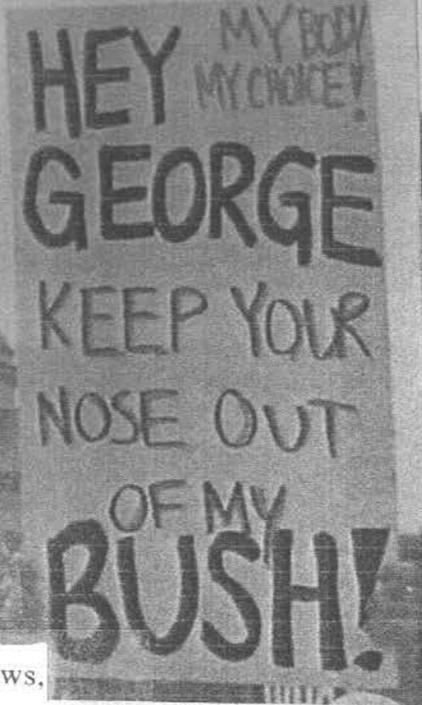
what I saw was a group of





powerful people— mothers, teenagers,

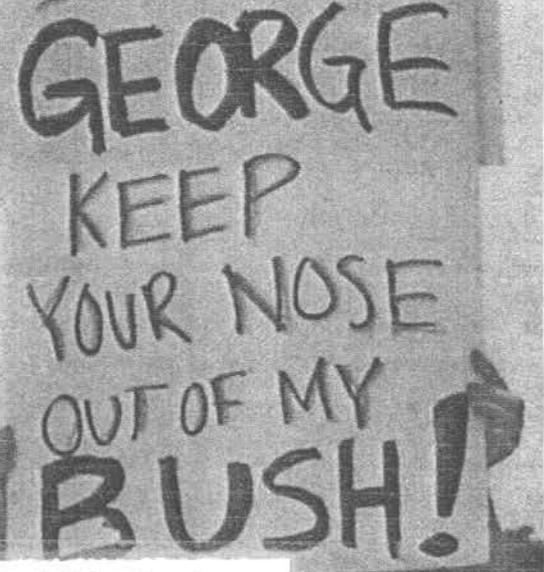
elderly, gays, students, doctors, Christians, Jews,



men, women—there to proclaim the right of the individual

to make sexual and

reproductive choices. I wonder how Bush felt when he saw



1.5 million angry feminists

stationed outside his bedroom window.

